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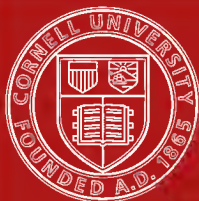
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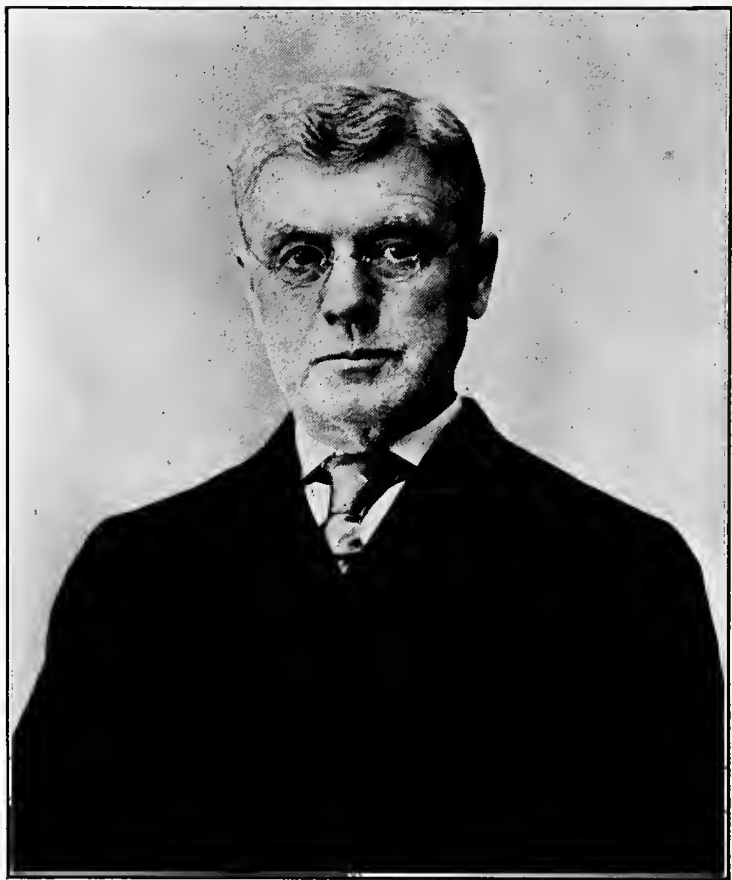
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*Very sincerely,
John Kennedy.*

THE BATAVIA SYSTEM
OF
Individual Instruction

BY
JOHN KENNEDY, A. M.

AUTHOR OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINE, THE SCHOOL
AND THE FAMILY, WHAT WORDS SAY, MUST GREEK GO? ETC.

SYRACUSE, N. Y.
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"For some years I have been conscious of the fact that our modern graded school system that strives to treat all the pupils in exactly the same way is resulting in worry and the consequent nervous strain so common in pupils and in teachers. The absence of everything of this kind from pupils and teachers in the Batavia schools is to me the most noteworthy result of organized individual instruction as it exists there. A system that will save for effective use the energy that is being wasted, and even worse than wasted, will increase many fold the efficiency of our schools. Such a system seems to have been evolved by Sup't Kennedy and to have passed beyond the experimental stage into the realm of demonstrated fact in the Batavia schools."—*Chas. F. Wheelock*, Assistant commissioner of secondary education, University of the State of New York.

"To-day while visiting the recitation of an old-time friend, Dr. Boughton, now at the Erasmus Hall high school, I noticed an incident which interested and pleased me, as doubtless it will you. In the class discussion about Oliver Goldsmith's school days, Dr. Boughton asked the question 'Are there really any dull boys?' One little fellow, not more than thirteen years old, said:

" 'There are not. This has been proved at Batavia, N. Y., where a system of individual instruction has been adopted which is attracting people from all parts of the world. This system shows that all children can learn if they only have a chance.'

"I was hardly prepared to hear a school boy speak of individual instruction, but this incident to me is significant. Dr. Gunnison, principal of the school, to whom I related this incident, is deeply interested in your work, and will in a few weeks send one or two of his teachers to study the system. And so the good work goes on." Sup't *Albert Leonard*, New Rochelle, N. Y., former president Michigan state normal schools.

INTRODUCTION

In the forty years that I have been getting acquainted with teachers I have found a large proportion of those who are more than placeholders divided into two classes: those who adopt every new notion that finds advocates, like no-recess, ambidexterity, vertical penmanship, and discard it as soon as other people begin to discard it; and those whose minds have been tickled by the epigram that what is new is not true and what is true is not new, and who refuse to admit that the unaccustomed may be worth investigation. The Batavia system has suffered from both of these classes. The first have nominally adopted it, without comprehension of its underlying and fundamental features; the others have passed it by on the other side as an undue featuring of a familiar principle. It will be well for both

these classes to know what the Batavia system is not.

(1) It is not individual instruction. There was never a school that did not give individual instruction. The Batavia system is a *system* of individual instruction, substituting for occasional, haphazard personal teaching, often after hours when both teacher and pupil are wearied, or during recess when the teacher is hurried, or in course of recitation when the pupil is embarrassed and the class is kept waiting, a system whereby such instruction has its regular time and place with none of these uncertainties and difficulties.

(2) It is not a way to boost pupils. Its foundation principle is not to tell but to lead the pupil to find out for himself. Instead of robbing the pupil of the joy of achievement by seeking to find for him a royal road to knowledge it glorifies the achievement and the joy of it, and inspires a love and a habit of it.

(3) It is not a device for helping backward

pupils. It helps them, but it helps bright pupils too, and there is no recognition of backward pupils. Every pupil in school is benefited.

(4) It is not a foe to the graded system. On the contrary, nowhere are the advantages and the necessity of the class more convincingly demonstrated than in this book. It sustains the graded system by supplementing it.

(5) It is not a way to get extra labor from the teacher. On the contrary, it lightens her work and relieves her of anxiety.

(6) It is not an excuse to add to expense. On the contrary it lightens it, producing more result at less cost.

If all this is true, and there is a great deal of excellent testimony here to prove it from men whose word commands respect, then the Batavia system is worthy of investigation, and this book with its full index makes that investigation easy.

The standard held up for pupils at Batavia is high. Far from the Montessori notion that

everything must yield to the impulses of the child, the pupil is taught from the first the joy of accomplishing what is given him to do. There is a modern tendency to rob children of this joy, to find a royal road to learning. "If I held all knowledge in my closed fist," the philosopher said, "I would open my hand and let it fly away for the joy of gathering it once more." It is not our knowledge we value in later years, but the process through which what we have of knowledge was procured.

Can you look back to the afternoon when you knew it was your duty to write an essay, but you wanted to play ball, to get a lesson, to read a book, all laudable things to do except that on this occasion it was your duty to do something else? Do you remember how you pondered over it before you could conquer yourself sufficiently to set at work, how hard it was to get started, but how when once the spirit of work came upon you it took possession of your whole being, till you wrote almost with

inspiration, and never rose from the table till it had been completed and corrected and copied, and you could say to yourself, "That is the best of which I am capable"? How many joys in life have you had equal to that? The joy was not in the product—you forgot the essay long ago. It was in the process, in the satisfaction of self-mastery, the victory of effort, the delight of accomplishment. Getting this is about all that is worth while in education.

It is to my mind the strongest feature of the Batavia system that it preserves and encourages and stimulates this joy of accomplishment. The child is never told by his teacher. He is shown how to find out for himself, and to enjoy finding out for himself. The leisure for individual work gives the teacher opportunity to discover where the boy's thinking machine is clogged, to remove the obstacle, and to set it going again. It is not the answer to the arithmetic problem the teacher wants: it is the ability and the perseverance of the boy

to get the answer. In class she can do little more than assure herself the answers are correct. In individual work she can make sure he can solve all such problems, and that he will joy in being able to do it. Love and work are the only things in life really worth while. Love comes to most of us but some miss it. Nobody need miss work, and if joy in honest work is planted in his soul his life will not be barren or unhappy.

That the Batavia children acquire this joy is not a theory. The principal argument for vocational work is that it takes hold of children when they have begun to be restless and want to give up school. The Batavia children do not want to give up school. They stay in the grades, they enter the high school, they finish the course, boys and girls alike, and they choose the cultural studies, the hard studies. In an enrolment of 1750 there are 850 in the upper seven of the twelve grades, and 375 in the high school. The proportion of pupils

studying Greek is larger than in any other city or village of the state.

One explanation is that under this system school work becomes intensive. There is none of the dawdling over an open book that not only is not study but precludes the knowledge of what study is. From time immemorial the recitation has been looked upon as a battle of wits between instructor and pupils to detect lack of preparation. A library could be made from familiar anecdotes, like that of the professor who said severely, "I have discovered that because I always begin at the head of the class and call upon you in turn, you have prepared yourselves only upon the questions that you reckon will fall to you. I shall put a short stop to that. Hereafter I shall begin at the other end of the class."

I am myself a graduate of a good college to which I owe a great deal, but not forty of the two thousand recitations I attended were in themselves instructive. I had a liking for

geometry, and one day I demonstrated a proposition in Euclid by a method different from that in the book. The tutor asked me to go over it again, and seemed puzzled. Finally he remarked, "That demonstration seems correct; I will assume that it is so. But hereafter please give in class the demonstration that is in the book. Then if you will hand in to me after class any original demonstrations I will give you extra credit for them." That was half a century ago, but I fear there would be little more to learn in many college recitations today. If a sort of ergograph could be devised that would measure mechanically whether the boys had got their lessons the time of the recitation might be saved.

Under the Batavia system the pupil is not tempted to pretend. It is no humiliation to say, "I do not know", which always means, "I want to know and am ready to be shown how to find out". The time of the class is not occupied in sparring with a bluffing pupil who

has made no preparation. The relation between pupil and teacher is of frankness, candor, effort, helpfulness. The moral effect of this is shown in manliness and womanliness.

The Batavia system requires not only work but honest work, fair methods, generous competition, the spirit of the hero and of the gentleman. With the individual teaching systematically provided for, these lessons can be inculcated, here a little, there a little.

What are all people most sensitive about? Any little reflection upon what we call good-breeding, the knowing what it is proper to do. Look back in your own life and ask yourself how many actual precepts of good breeding were ever given to you in words? Usually you will find there were very few, but they came at the right time, and each one gave you an insight into a score of principles with a multitude of applications. The school cannot overcome the influences of an uncultivated home environment, but it can mightily modify

them. By here a hint and there a suggestion the teacher who has time to do it and interest to do it can turn her boys and girls toward an ideal and an observation and an apprehension and a consideration for others that will put upon the school as a whole the impress of good breeding. Which would you rather have said of your school, "It took the prize at the county spelling match", or, "It certainly has a remarkably well-mannered lot of boys and girls"?

Nor should Mr. Kennedy's claim be forgotten that under this system the teachers have time and opportunity not only to gain entrance into social circles but to shine there. Why not? It is every year an increasing wonder to me that such fine young women become teachers. It is no exaggeration to say that a majority of our choicest girls enter the schoolroom, at least for a time: it is still the natural employment for the well educated young woman who does not want to be idle.

But we have been wearing out our teachers.

A woman teacher is at her zenith, so far as eligibility is concerned, at twenty-eight, which means that from twenty to thirty she is overworked, nervously exhausted. Her school drags upon her, she loses her resilience, she is worn out just when she should be becoming most useful. Incidentally the school absorbs her, and she has no time or taste for social functions.

Mr. Kennedy says that is not true under the Batavia system. The teacher's work is done at three, and she has no worries over the day or the morrow. She can go home to dress, to call, to be hostess or guest, to enter into the spirit of all that is restful and stimulating in a cultivated community. If that is true, that alone makes the Batavia system worth looking into.

It will be noticed that a good deal is said here of the happiness of the children as contrasted with the suffering, the tragedies of the usual schoolroom. Are these phrases exaggerated? Here is a letter that I happened to

come across today, which I quote only because it will save my looking up a more recent one. It was left behind by a boy 14 years old in Morris, Ill., who committed suicide in 1898.

“Friends:—I shot myself because the teacher would not let me alone. I worked six examples on the board, and I asked her if they were write, and she said ‘You may go to your seat and have a failure for bothering me,’ and after I had went to my seat she had me name on the board a big ott (0) after it, and then they laughed at me. if I can’t be marked for what I work I can go to heaven and the Lord won’t cheat me eather. Dear mother, I love you and Clara and Eliza, do not weep over me, but tell Pap If he comes back that I said good-by to him. this is all I have to say I hope the Lord will watch over you All Good-by to all my Friends In love your friend

RAY BOTHALMEY, City.”

In the forty years that I have edited the *School Bulletin* there has been hardly a month when such instances have not come to my notice: two of them in Brooklyn I chronicled in the June number this year. We forget, now that we are grown, how real were the sorrows of our childhood. I was myself expelled from a Vermont academy by a principal who could have got along with me easily enough if his thought had been less upon his dignity and more upon the boy. I did not lay it up against him: I had given him considerable provocation; but it was no fault of his that I did not go straight to the devil. Teachers get overwrought, nervous, touchy, irritable, till a naturally kind heart shows recognizable malice. My children have suffered in school to my knowledge. Your children have suffered, whether you know it or not. The word is not a bit too strong.

Now there is testimony in this book from a score of witnesses competent to judge that the Batavia system eliminates this suffering. If

it does, it ought to be adopted. All these men and women may be mistaken, but their array of testimony makes it the duty of school men to investigate.

A word should be said for some of these witnesses. Superintendent Ladd is competent. He did not originate the system and has none of the parental pride of the parent. He has a legal mind and training; before he became a teacher he was a practising attorney. He is known among the teachers of the state as a man of careful judgment and moderate statement. He is at the head of one of the committees appointed by the Regents of the University to prepare examination questions for all the schools of the state. So the chapter that he writes is worth reading and pondering. We may be sure that what he says weighs sixteen ounces to the pound. Mind what it tells is not what was done the first year the system was tried. He has known it for all the sixteen years it has been in operation. He is speaking of permanent results.

Miss Hamilton, Miss Stein, Miss Ferry are competent witnesses. They have taught under the Batavia system from the beginning, and they speak of what they know and of what they have been called upon to prove in the Universities of Pennsylvania and of Virginia.

Superintendent W. H. Holmes is competent; he has recently been called from Westerly, R. I., to the charge of the schools of Mount Vernon in this state. What he says in chapter XXX is said at much greater length in his published book, "School organization and the individual child" (Worcester, 1912), a masterly treatment of the subject. You will find like testimony in Bagley's "School and class management".

Prof. Thiselton Mark, author of the "History of educational theories" and editor of Charles Hoole's "A new discovery of the old art of teaching school", was sent here by the English government to inspect certain phases of our school work, and his endorsement is emphatic. Dr. J. A. Houston, inspector of high schools,

was sent to Batavia by the minister of education for the province of Ontario, and declares unequivocally for what the Batavia plan provides.

Stanley Holmes, Barney Whitney, Emmet Belknap, E. D. Palmer, J. K. Beck are city superintendents of Massachusetts, New York, Michigan, Indiana, who came to see for themselves and who were convinced. In face of such testimony it does not become the young teacher to declare there is nothing new to be learned here.

The variety of expression among these witnesses is a proof of their independent investigation. Even the "three don'ts" that lie at its foundation are remembered by some of them as two, the third, not to do any thing upon a lesson that has not been recited, being overlooked. In fact it will be found interesting to compare their various reports through the very full index, and see how they differ in expression and in detail but agree upon the fundamental principles.

A word should be said for Mr. Kennedy's own style. If the reader has time for only one chapter let him read that upon the laggard, page 225. If he does not believe it at the first reading, let him reflect upon it and read it again, and he will recognize a new and sound view-point of untold possibilities.

C. W. BARDEEN

Syracuse, N. Y., Aug. 12, 1914

THE BATAVIA SYSTEM
OF
INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION

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The first day the teacher went to the child's desk, but had to lean over, so thereafter the teacher had a chair in front and the child came to her. With this exception the plan has been unchanged from the first.



THE INDIVIDUAL TEACHER AT WORK IN A TWO-TEACHER ROOM



The class teacher at work, with the individual teacher on the right. The empty desks belong to pupils now reciting in front.

THE BATAVIA SYSTEM

HISTORY AND EXPOSITION

Chapter I

Its Origin

In the fall of 1898 a grade room in Batavia was overflowing. It contained 53 children. The usual procedure in a case of that kind had been to take out a portion of the children and open up a new room.

The room referred to happened to be a large one. There were seats not occupied, and there was floor-space for other seats. So the congestion was not a physical one.

The superintendent thought that he saw an opportunity for a great rescue. He had seen grades breaking down; and had seen children and teachers collapsing under the strain of wholesale teaching. He therefore advised the board to leave all the children in that room and

to send the new teacher in there to do individual work exclusively. He said: "The standing reproach against the graded school system ever since it was started has been that it does not reach the needs of individuals; that in its scheme of handling masses it often over-rides the individual and rides him down. Let there be one room in the world in which that reproach will not hold. Let there be one room in which the individual is attended to. I believe that every child can be saved to health and success; and I believe that we take off all strain from a teacher when we take from her those who are dragging. I believe that the teacher now in that room can handle all those children and many more with perfect ease and success, if she has some one to assume the burden of the laggards."

The board felt that the superintendent was right; and though they had no precedent for their action, they proceeded to make their own precedent, and appointed on the spot the first

individual teacher in the history of education.

The instructions given to that teacher were to go into that room, find the most backward children, and make them the most forward. She did that, of course. And for the first time in the history of education there was a large room leveled up, a large room in which there was no child dragging and no child retarded.

The individual teacher did her work at a table, calling the child to her as she became ready for him, and detaining him as long as she deemed it expedient. She had the first claim on a child and might call on or detain him even if his class was reciting.

To guard against any injudicious help she was restricted by three restraining "don'ts". 1st, don't tell the child anything, but see that he knows it. 2d, don't do anything for the child but see that he does it. 3d, don't do any individual work on an unrecited lesson.

The class-teacher went on as usual conducting classes all day long, the room being divided

into two sections, a preparation section and a recitation section. No recitation was obstructed any longer. Lack of preparation meant lack of participation. The ready ones participated; and there was no longer any marking of time. The children were all happy; and they were all successful. There were no failures to be accounted for.

It was thus demonstrated that teaching is a dual process; and that failures are the result of trying to carry on education by a single process.

After establishing the dual process in rooms that overflowed, then came the question of establishing it in rooms that were not overflowing. That was accomplished by having the single teacher give every other period to individual work. If she had but a single grade the individual period corresponded with their preparation period. If she had two grades she arranged for individual periods by having a two-day program.

In the high school each teacher assigned five lessons a week, but used every other period for individual attention. And in addition the high school had an individual table at which a teacher labored all day long.

Chapter II

Underlying Principles

1. Schools become clogged, (a) by slow minds, (b) by irregular attendance, (c) by discouraged minds.

2. The attempt to force forward an obstructed school is detrimental to all concerned. (a) It overstrains the teacher. (b) It depresses the teaching. (c) It destroys the condition of repose and equipoise essential to good teaching. (d) It is wasteful of time, destructive of interest, and promotive of discouragement. (e) It tends to wholesale failure, indicated by the great multitudes who drop out, and by the indifferent scholarship of the few who persevere to the end.

3. Statistics show that in elementary and in secondary schools, and throughout the first stages of higher education the falling out is the rule and that a low grade of work and scholar-

ship is the rule with those who remain. Hence failure is the rule, and high success the exception.

4. The clogging of schools may be practically, if not entirely relieved, by devoting half the teaching force to individual instruction. (a) By directing attention definitely to the point where the pinch or clog occurs. (b) By operating upon the difficulty according to its exact nature and without resort to any kind of force.

5. Individual attention involves no strain on the teacher and no violence to the pupil; hence it tends to that condition of repose and equipoise essential to good teaching and to successful study.

6. Individual teaching tends to check all lagging and flagging, whether resulting from discouragement or lack of interest, and to promote a general forward movement in the student ranks. (a) It sustains the interest of the brighter pupils by permitting them to move on, and

by doing away with the irksome deadlocks, repetitions and tragic struggles of the recitation. (b) It brings forward the slower pupils by recognizing their real trouble, by saving them from public exposure and persecution, by gently leading them back from chaos to where the ground is solid under their feet, by giving them direction, and by awakening within them confidence in their own powers.

7. Individual instruction is quite as potent and essential in the moral as in the intellectual training of youth. (a) The will to do what is right and wholesome is an expression of moral health. (b) Failure tends to unsettle character and to pervert the will. Under failure there is a giving way of either physical or moral health, sometimes of both.

8. Individual instruction is a definitely restricted agency in the education of youth. (a) Its function is strictly remedial; it addresses itself solely to disturbed conditions. (b) Its end is attained in the restoration of desirable

conditions. (c) It brings about its own elimination and gives way when the conditions for exclusive class instruction are ideal.

9. Class instruction is the normal and permanent form of the best education of youth. It supplies (a) the spur of emulation, (b) the stimulus of numbers, (c) the attrition of mind upon mind, (d) the side lights from many minds, (e) a greater breadth of teaching than can be given to an individual, and (f) an experience in thinking and doing in the presence of a public.

10. Only through the restorative effects of individual instruction can a school reach anything like ideal conditions for class work, and only through the constant operation of individual instruction can those conditions be maintained. Therefore, individual instruction is a constantly necessary phase of school activity, the constant and necessary supplement and corrective of class teaching.

11. Individual instruction involves no increase of labor or expense in the education of youth, but rather the reduction of both.

12. Finally, statistics show that schools provided with systematic individual instruction carry their pupils to higher stages of advancement and give them sounder scholarship than do schools which lack this agency.

Chapter III

*Results in Batavia**

We have in Batavia learned the very great importance of individual instruction, and have committed ourselves to it fully. It is scarcely too much to say that our school system has undergone a revolution. Our experiment has not taught us to believe that individual instruction will ever be the prime pillar of education or even be the normal form of teaching. We are more convinced than ever before that children will continue to be assembled in classes, to be drilled and trained and educated in the presence of their fellows. In classes only can they get the needed spur of emulation, the attrition of mind upon mind, the helpful sidelights from many minds, and the breadth of teaching which is compelled by the presence of numbers.

* From an address delivered at Lakewood, N. Y.

To start a great school-system forward on purely class-instruction however is like starting a great army forward without its medical service. There will soon be culminative distress, misery, suffering, despair, loss, depletion.

It is no mere figure of speech that charges up distress and suffering to schools. The work of the class is guaged to average capacity. Fully half the children are below that average, and are dragging despairingly in the rear. Their dragging is a peril to themselves and an infliction to the rest. Their dragging is also a positive peril to the teacher. Distress tends to awaken sympathy; but when the distress is hanging about your neck and tending to drag you under, your sympathy turns to a fierce struggle for yourself. Half the class is composed of children dragging down their teacher. And how about the other half? They are children tethered either to an immovable obstruction or to one moving so slowly as to be insufferably irksome. These children are in just as

much danger as the others. Depletion will begin on both sides of the line. Loss of interest is about as fatal as loss of courage.

We saw at last the better way. And our recent years have been years of thanksgiving. In these years, we have opened no graves; in these years, we have broken no hearts; in these years, we have wrecked no lives; in these years, we have touched no child except for his or her good; in these years, we have had the hearts of our children filled with song, and we have made teaching a most salubrious business for our teachers. In these years we have taken all the obliquity out of our grades. In these years, we have reduced depletion to a most wonderful minimum. Out of what would have been the wrecks of our former system, we have given to our high school a great rate of increase. In these years, we have almost absolutely banished disorder, and have promoted a marked development of character. In these years no drudgery has been forced back upon the homes; and

no sob in the household has had its origin in the school. And so I might go on indefinitely, depicting the difference between a school that was sick and a school that is well.

And the remedy for those evils is so simple that it will always be a matter of wonder that it was never thought of and applied before. Remedies are likely to be simple.

We did not have to wait weeks and months to see the effect of individual instruction on that room. The effect was instantaneous. There was suddenly one room in which there was nothing the matter. The teacher who had been finding it all wrong, suddenly found it all right. And it staid all right. Though she had been on the verge of hysterics with forty-nine she was as happy as a parent bird when the number had swollen to seventy-nine. And every additional new-comer, caused a smile to irradiate her features. The same children that had been killing her cured her. She suddenly discovered that there was nothing the matter with her.

Where she had been nagging the forty-nine she was clucking the seventy-nine. And not one of them doubted that she was their dearest friend, and not one of them failed to be regarded as the rarest child on earth.

And her power expanded *pari passu* with her affections. She laid out broader schemes of work. A healthy mind and a warm heart went foraging for the children. The course of studies became a mere skeleton on which she built the rich materials of her own providing.

And we observed in her what we have since observed in all the rest of our teachers, that it was a great benefit to her to be there under those conditions. She was no longer a martyr to education. She took on health continually, and with it she took on that comeliness that is given only by ripening intelligence and expanding sympathies. It is safe to say that no one in that room derived greater benefit from being there, than she did herself.

She became part of the social life of the town.

And her great stock of vigor made her quite ready for social demands. And from her contact with refined circles she brought back an increasing refinement and breadth of view to lavish upon the children. The hysterical teacher has no vitality left for social demands and nobody wants her. Since the introduction of individual instruction the teachers have become the foremost ladies of the place. And they not only bear themselves off well, but they are proving themselves a valuable leaven in the circles where formerly they were not in demand. They are showing a lively interest in art, history, sociology, and all that relates to the improvement of society.

Now as to the children. The change in their case was just as striking and just as sudden as in the case of the teacher. Almost instantly it became manifest that no child in that room was under the harrow; no child there was fighting down a bitter thought or stifling a sob; no child there was breaking its heart in pathetic silence;

no child there was wearily waiting for the great machine to move on; no child there was turning in desperation to that well-known party who "always finds some mischief still for idle hands to do". All were infused with the spirit of zealous enterprise, and the upraised hands and bright, cheerful faces eloquently reflected the happiness that was singing at the heart.

We revelled in our new-found bliss for fully a year and a half before we said a word about it. we wanted to study it undisturbed; we wanted to test it fully; we wanted to make sure of it. We knew that a good thing needs no exploitation, and that a bad thing should not be exploited. When we did speak it was in response to an official inquiry from the State Superintendent as to what new departures had been undertaken. Since then the literature of the matter has been unfolding.

But to return. We noticed that the slant and echelon quickly began to vanish from the room, and the whole grade began to move for-

ward at a rate that satisfied everybody and distressed nobody. And at the end of the year we promoted the entire room. And before the end of the year we had no occasion to push forward anybody. But we quickly noticed the effect upon our register. We noticed that the rate of attendance rapidly waxed, and the rate of absence rapidly waned. We noticed a tendency toward a maximum of attendance; and it became no uncommon thing to strike that maximum, to have actually a hundred per cent present. We learned that happy children are not prone to get sick, and that interested children are not detained out for trifling causes.

We learned that all children may be educated. We have found our brightest scholars at the lowest end of our slanting line, and we have found our strongest characters there. Under our old system those were foredoomed. Their disappearance was known to be only a question of time, and I fear that it was a consummation only too devoutly wished. Despair on one side

and resentment on the other could have but one termination.

It is true that some minds are woefully slow at the outset, but that is no proof of incapability. The worst error of teachers is to assume incapability and therefore to repudiate responsibility. You have in this error the cause of much of the depletion in schools. The fact is that the heritage of the average child is a heritage of capability; the amount of real incapability is so small that it may be dismissed as no appreciable element in our problem. The proper attitude of mind in a teacher is to assume capability, and then struggle sympathetically and intelligently to make that capability active. Once aroused to confidence in its powers, the slow mind retains its momentum, and is ever after the best and most reliable in the school and in the world. Class-teaching sweeps over such a mind, or would hurry it along with the lash. Individual instruction knows no lash. It bends in intelligent sympathy to the real

difficulty, puts courage into the despairing soul, arranges a sequence of efforts, and gradually calls forth or builds up victorious independence.

Now to arrest decimation and depletion is to have a most wonderful effect upon the size, spirit, and results of a school. But there is another side to the decimation and depletion that is not always understood. And that is the condition of the eliminated. They not only disappear, but they disappear injured. The mental and moral injuries may be for the present somewhat vague and obscure; but the physical injuries are all too real. The amount of physical injury alone that has its origin in schools is very great. Schools as disease centres are receiving the deepest attention of hygienists. I am persuaded that where individual instruction is provided, no child will become sick in consequence of going to school. And furthermore I am convinced that an ailing child may be restored to health by being placed in such a school.

And so I might go on indefinitely, depicting the transformation which individual instruction has effected in our children. There is scarcely any end to the subject, and the benefits are manifold. The old system was a long catalogue of injurious tendencies; the new system is by contrast an endless list of benefits.

But every effect has its cause. We have been considering most wonderful effects upon both children and teachers, as well as upon the community. Let us now turn to the cause. The cause is in that quiet second teacher, who is not heard at all, and is scarcely seen, the teacher who went in there to give all her time to individual teaching. Our grades run with perfect smoothness and perfect safety since we have had some one around to look after and restore conditions. I know no vehicle that becomes more suddenly fouled and unworkable than a large class of children, and we have recently learned that no vehicle may be more promptly or completely relieved. And unless relieved,

the graded school system becomes organized injury.

The mental and moral injuries are no less real and deplorable than those of a physical nature. School is a most profitable place for those who are interested in their studies and who are doing well in them; it is a most pernicious place for those who are doing poorly.

But many a parent springs to the rescue of his boy before it is too late; he takes him out of school to save him. And he either puts him into a workshop to learn habits of industry, and to acquire the art of self-support, or he places him in a special school where he will receive the personal attention which his peculiar weaknesses demand. And here we have another cause of the depletion of public schools.

This great unrest is interpreted in various ways; but I think that its real explanation is a growing public consciousness of the failure of machinery and organization in and of themselves to accomplish the proper education and development of childhood and youth.

Our new departure amounted to a decided innovation, and we were somewhat curious to see how the people would regard it. It was instantly universally popular. All classes applauded it. They said that it was the most sensible thing ever thought of, to set apart a teacher to get the children out of their trouble. And the popularity shows no sign of waning.

The work of our second teacher may be understood perhaps from her instructions, which were to find the weak spots in the room and make them the strong spots, to find the laggards and bring them forward. The measure of her work is the condition of the room. Her work may be called, what it truly is, ministration. The work of a ministering angel is never noisy nor ostentatious, but it is the very breath of life to those upon whom it is exercised. I have perhaps already shown that the class-teacher of the room had herself become filled with the spirit of ministry.

We were wishing for other overflowing rooms,

that we might extend this dual system. And six times in the interim they have been relieved in the same way. And every time the results have been exactly the same, confirming our belief that we have found a most powerful working principle of education.

But how about the rooms that were not overflowing? We did not feel that it was necessary to put two teachers to doing the work of one. We resolved to vary the experiment and make each single teacher an individual instructor half the time. The effect was quite as surprising as in the case of the two teachers. The single teacher brought forward her own laggards, relieved her room, and brought it into a condition comparing very favorably with that prevailing in the two-teacher rooms. So we have individual instruction throughout our entire system.

This is the Batavia system of combined individual and class instruction, a system which we have been carefully observing and testing

for the past three years, and which I think need not any longer be called the Batavia experiment.

It is the merit of our system that it involves no backward step; it is not in the slightest degree destructive. It utilizes every bit of the graded school plant and frame-work, and even the graded school instruction. It is, as we see it, a great step forward. It takes the graded school with all its advantages and would put that school into the best working condition. It is the graded school transformed, we might almost say transfigured.

It is the graded school shaking off all its destructive tendencies and taking on the tendency to unalloyed beneficence. It is, we believe, the evolution of the graded school.

Wherever multitudes are to be dealt with in any way some kind of organization is a prime necessity. In order to subject our great multitudes of children to educational processes, some kind of organization is fundamentally necessary. It would be financially impossible

to place a tutor with every child, or in every household. And we have already shown that if it were possible, it is not desirable. The children need to be assembled with their fellows, and economy of service requires that they should be brought together in groups.

The graded-school system admirably meets this two-fold necessity. It is a superb organization of the children who are to be subjected to processes of education. It is one of the great contributions of the nineteenth century, and a decided gain to the world. We cannot over-estimate its great value and usefulness. It makes universal education in the great centres of population possible.

But neither should we overlook its unfinished condition. It stopped short of completion. And in that incompleteness lies all its deadly possibilities. It is the steam-boiler without the governor, the steam engine without the fly-wheel. It receives an ill-regulated force and applies it spasmodically and without modera-

tion. It is a great invention lacking some finishing pieces.

Such lack in material invention is the defect in the logic of the inventor. But no inventor expects his first machine to be worth anything. He knows that he does not see his way through; he knows that he does not foresee every contingency. He knows that he must eventually supplement his *a priori* ideas with those that come to him *a posteriori*, before he will have a thoroughly adjusted instrument. His principle is his own inspiration, but he must get his crowning adjustments from trial.

And so the great graded school system, springing from a mighty conception, is yet working somewhat at random and with much destructive crankiness because of not having its finishing adjustments.

Chapter IV

*Official Report to Albany**

The Batavia schools enjoy the distinction of giving the world something entirely new in educational methods, something that was given a thorough trial last year and proved so unqualified a success that it is likely to revolutionize the public school systems of the entire country. It has already attracted the attention of famous educators and is being thoroughly investigated by them. The following report, made by Superintendent Kennedy to the Hon. Charles R. Skinner, Superintendent of the State Department of Public Instruction, and forwarded to Albany today, explains in detail the workings of the new system and the results obtained from it during the past year:

"In reporting the workings of our school the past year we have to make mention of one very

*From the *Batavia Daily News*.

marked departure. We have been dividing our rooms as rapidly as they overflow, but we had an overflowing room this past year that we decided not to divide. As the room was very large, thus giving no trouble on the score of air space, or hygienic conditions, it occurred to us to try the experiment of placing an extra teacher in the room, who would do only individual work and do it silently.

“The effect has been at once a revelation and a revolution. It revealed to us how to lift from our graded school system the reproach of giving insufficient individual instruction. We seemed to stand between education en masse and chaos. We shall hereafter have no temptation to return to chaos. We have discovered how to get the benefit of organization, and, at the same time, reach the needs of individuals. We have already extended the new system to a second room, with the same noticeable and gratifying results as in the first instance.

“Those results are (a) removal of discouragement

ment. Children who have been falling to the rear and becoming drags, either by reason of slowmindedness, or by reason of unavoidable absence, have been delighted to have some one show them a way out of their trouble. They have taken courage and moved forward into line, causing (b) an evenness in the grades that was never known under the old graded school system. And their coming forward caused (c) a more rapid movement in the entire grade, so that those who do not get the individual instruction directly, get it, and all the benefits of it, indirectly. And (d) the joy of the parents at the idea of the children getting individual attention and getting on, is touching. And (e) the enthusiasm of the taxpayers in general is quite as great as that of the immediate patrons. We are indebted for the new name of our system to one of the large taxpayers who does not now send children to the schools. And (f) we save yearly a large sum on the cost of heating, janitoring, and rent of rooms."

Chapter V

*Relation to Class Teaching**

The Batavia system has been in operation nearly seven years, having been started in November 1898. It originated in the observation that unrectified mass-teaching does not work, or works only widespread disaster. The Batavia system supplies the corrective in the form of individual teaching. It does not abolish class teaching; but it frees the latter from clogs and renders it operative; it not only enables class-teaching to move forward freely and unobstructed, but it takes from it every tendency to crush and grind. It is the corrector and the coadjutor of class teaching, rather than its displacer. That children who are falling to the rear in their studies suffer keenly, pitifully, often dangerously, I think none will deny. The

*The next six chapters are from an address delivered at Westerly, R. I.

sob may be stifled in the school, but it breaks out in convulsions on the mother's breast at home; or it is revealed on wakeful couches, or in the mutterings of restless sleep. Well for the mother if it is not revealed in the delirium of consuming fever.

Parents suffer with their children; the grief of the child is anguish to the parents; the trouble of the child is a double extra labor to the parent, already exhausted with the daily burden of life; the extra labor of teaching and explaining; the worrying labor of teaching what parents themselves do not always understand; the discouraging labor of teaching in a state of exhaustion those who are not in a receptive condition; the extra labor moreover of ministering in the lonely watches of the night. Well for the children if it is not the mother's brow that is attacked with the consuming fever.

Teachers suffer with the children. With backward dragging children hanging like a dead load on her strength, the teacher soon becomes

conscious of worry and over-strain; and worry and over-strain work with accelerated speed toward collapse. Then arises the spectre of a new worry to hasten the catastrophe; the worry about a future of helplessness totally unprovided for.

But the public suffer with the children, the parents, and the teachers. The ancient plagues are vanishing before the militant campaigns of modern sanitation. But a new plague is sweeping over the world and claiming its victims by the myriad. This is the plague of nervous debility or neurasthenia. We say that our nervousness comes from the fierce competitions of the business world, oblivious as yet to the fact that the cause is largely in the schools. The public suffers further; it suffers in the loss of those who should be its pride, its hope, its assured protection; it suffers by the presence of those who are its annoyance, its menace, its danger. The Batavia system tends to arrest all that. Incurability and genuine interest

and joy in school work are almost absolutely incompatible, if they are not an actual contradiction in terms.

Six years ago it occurred to Batavia to assign teachers to give personal attention to the backward and distressed children; to sit by their side; to wipe away their tears; to dispel their despair; to quiet their apprehensions; to warm them up with assured sympathy; to give them that composure of spirit that would render mental action possible; to train their attention; to train their apprehension; to train their reasoning; to train them in the art of self-appropriation; to awaken their confidence; to fill them with joyful hope; to arouse their ambition; and to send them back to their classes filled not only with the spirit of confidence but with the very spirit of challenge.

The Batavia system conserves and makes use of about all the old school plant; yet its maxims and philosophy diverge so far from the old that it might almost be called a new education. It requires either that half the teachers shall be

assigned to individual teaching, or that half the time of single teachers shall be employed on individuals. This is the quantitative feature. This individual teaching, as employed in Batavia, is an entirely new factor in education, based upon maxims that are entirely new, and leading to results that are surprising to all who see them.

In the past six years the schools of Batavia have sent back only sunshine, safety and happiness to the homes. Happy schools make happy homes; in happy homes the children sleep and bloom; in happy homes the parents sleep and retain the bloom so needful to their children. In happy homes there is little need of the doctor, less need of those who often succeed the doctor. And the parents are prompt to recognize the change. The Batavia parents said immediately: "You have brought sunshine into our homes." A visiting school officer after passing through a few of our rooms ceased to be a school officer and became only a father; he ejaculated: "One thing is certain; this system must go to

my town or my two little girls must come up here. I have had one daughter wrecked by that old harsh system and I don't propose to take any chances on the other two."

"I look around in vain for the anaemic child; I see only bloom, wonderful beauty, and sparkling happiness. It makes me long to see the people that will be walking the streets twenty-five years hence." So spoke a distinguished educational leader and writer, an expert in almost every phase of educational work.

Happy schools and happy homes meet every desire of childhood; in them and by them the children are safe-guarded from moral danger. In the past six years no child below the high school has been required to take home a single task. School hours are sacred to sweet labor; but labor, be it ever so sweet, is not permitted to trench upon other demands of life; it is locked in with the books and empty benches when the key turns at three. Back work of any kind, whether due to slowness of mind or temporary

absence, is treated as an arrear that belongs solely to the school, and by no means to the home nor to the parents. And those arrears are reached during school hours in a regular and legitimate way, and not by a special imprisonment after school, in which unhappy children are required to meet in the character of delinquents teachers, who are in a state of uncharitable exhaustion. The Batavia system makes provision for every possible contingency, and what cannot, and should not, be evaded, is reached under conditions that are entirely normal and salutary. Nothing that should be done is omitted and nothing that is done is done in the spirit of fret and fury.

Worry is all gone; no one worries any more, neither teacher nor children. And where worry is gone there can scarcely be any over-work or over-strain. The old proverb well says: "Not work but worry that kills." Under nervous depletion any work is over-work; any work then is dangerous. With good nervous vigor one

could almost work the twenty-four hours through. With nervous depletion there is awful danger even in a thoroughly sanitary school-building; with nervous vigor and spiritual serenity, one might teach school safely under very bad sanitary conditions.

Chapter VI

Children Retained in School

It must be conceded that many causes outside of schools, and for which the schools are not at all responsible, contribute to the emptying of schools. But when all that may be justly charged up to those outside causes are massed into an aggregate, they will be found to constitute a mere rill compared to the great stream discharged by the school itself. The untaught must go.

Every school child is at every moment at a crisis in his career. He needs not only freedom from actual violence, but he needs immediately that active and sympathetic guidance and encouragement that are the determining factors in his career. His case will not wait. There is little hope of resuscitation. His only hope is in formation, not in reformation. And a

school that would save even a driblet must be just to all.

“There is a tide in the affairs of (children)
Which, taken at its flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.”

Evil finds its readiest recruits in the victims of injustice. When the school has lost all charm then other charmers are without competition. The street appeals where the school loses its appeal; and the street can make a very active hoodlum out of a very torpid school-boy. To inflict the slightest injustice in the school is to play into the hands of the street. But the drags stay in school long enough to affect the moral stamina even of the quick. The school will lose its charm to those who are retarded as well as to those who are downtrodden; the stream of disappearance is not restricted to those of slow or timid apprehension.

The Batavia system is no Darwinian machine grinding down the nineties in the hope that the

fives or tens may be saved. The fives or tens may survive, but they are not saved. The golden opportunity of childhood, that opportunity which can never be recalled, that tide which presents its flood but once, is lost to two classes of children, to those who are dragging, and to those who are dragged; and that is about all of them; for about all the children in school may be classed either as drags or dragged.

The Batavia system is not a place for getting rid of children; it is a place for retaining them. No child in the Batavia system is a *persona non grata*; no child in the Batavia system is crowded to the wall, and through it into the street. As a result the great vacuities in the upper stories have been filling up; the high school has doubled; and grades strong in numbers and strong in confidence and in study power are surging around its threshold.

Interest in their studies is proving to the Batavia children a great moral safeguard; and an atmosphere of spiritual repose, and teachers

who are sane, sympathetic, and just, are promoting a growth in goodness that is very remarkable.

Of the increase in the high school nearly seventy per cent. is boys. If you would get a test of the efficiency of a school system, count the boys in the upper stories. Boys succumb more easily than girls to unjust or flabby work in schools; boys have more inducements to leave school than girls have; boys are more exposed than girls to influences that work against the school; boys are more likely to be withdrawn from school than girls are. We say that they are withdrawn to help keep the wolf from the family door. This is sometimes true. It is oftener true that they are withdrawn to keep them from becoming an actual burden on the family. The teeth of the suppositious wolf grow very dull when the boys are keenly interested in their school work and are making every moment tell for improvement. The string of withdrawal is not on the dilligent boy; it is on

the boy who is beginning to grow limp. And parental wisdom never did itself more credit than in the withdrawal of such boys. The wolf bogie serves as the excuse, not as the cause. Nothing is more fully established than the fact that parents will make the last sacrifice to keep in school the boys who are doing well there.

But there are other compensations than money. "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy;" since our teachers have been lifting from their children the load of sorrow and discouragement, they have been lifting every crushing load from themselves. And now they are able to live their lives. They are not now so nervewrecked and exhausted as to have to shun society. They now want it, and they now are wanted; they get their growth in the social graces, in the ease of manner, and in the broadening of thought which contact with society alone can give; and they bring back that increased grace and strength to bear upon the cultivation of their pupils. To enrich the

course of studies just enrich the teachers; they will then treat the course of studies as a mere frame-work on which to build the honey stores of their own providing. And in addition to this the teacher has the comfort of health and assured longevity.

Chapter VII

Expense Reduced

But does not this two-teacher system increase the expense? No, it reduces the expense. There are actually fewer teachers in Batavia than there would have been if the Batavia system had never been thought of. With a team of teachers you can assemble more than two sets of children, if your room is large enough; and the stimulus of a large assembly will be a benefit to all, both children and teachers. With large classes that are free from drags, the teacher teaches better and with greater ease. The orator needs large houses; it is death to speak to empty benches. And how he does plead with the sparse audience to gather up around him. And so it is in class work; the teacher finds a supporting bouyancy in interested members; and they call out from her a breadth and

depth of teaching that would be impossible with a few. And the children in large classes that have no drags, get more, and more varied stimulus than in a small one. There is the very momentum of numbers; there is supplied the spur of emulation; there is the attrition of many minds upon each single mind; there are the sidelights and suggestions that come from many points of view. But especially there is an audience, a public in miniature, in which the child can train himself, or be trained, to public action and ultimate civic usefulness. The child is on his way to community life, and the large class supplies the means for a community training. The conditions of modern life, the economies of the situation, the nature of the child, and the laws of teaching, all require that the children shall be massed. But a mass and a herd are very much alike; and therein lies all the danger in wholesale education. Indeed a herd is a mass, and there is where the destructive fallacy enters. The children need to be

massed, but education must see that they are never herded.

On the other hand there is no greater fallacy than to try to solve the school question by cutting up the class into small groups. If this is done for the purpose of reaching the individual, it does not reach him. It quadruples the expense of education only to emasculate it. Horace Greeley said that the way to resume specie payments is to resume. The way to reach the individual is to reach him. But how if the groups are made of those of equal aptness? In other words how about forming quick sections and slow sections? Yes, how about branding the children? Was there not suffering enough without attacking the child's pride?

In the Batavia system where the work of two teachers is not needed the single teacher carries the burden alone. And she does it well. She does her individual work, and she does her class work; and she does both equally well, in equal intervals of time. She takes care of

everybody and takes care of all; and she has no need to blush for her results as compared with those in the two-teacher rooms. The Batavia rule is, fifty children or more, two teachers; fewer than fifty, one teacher.

But how about an ungraded room for lag-gards? Our doctrine is that any segregation whatsoever is unnecessary, unwise, and unjust. The ungraded room seems to us the most objectionable form of segregation. It is a quasi penal institution, designed primarily for truants and incorrigibles. And possibly it is the proper means of treating juvenile delinquents. But how about "running in" children who have been guilty of no offense whatever? children who are only in trouble? and herding them in a penal institution with criminals? How about sending a child to "do time" simply because he has been out a week or two with sickness?

I am not sure that even truancy and incorrigibility may not be reached best by the justice and sympathy of the regular grade room. Even

violent incorrigibility is amenable to good treatment; Botticelli's masterpiece represents Lady Wisdom quieting the fierce centaur with the hand of genuine friendship. The wild creature is as amazed as a wild boy at finding somebody entertaining kindly feeling for him.

Chapter VIII

Independence Developed

But will not individual teaching train the children to lean and depend upon others? No, individual teaching will not do that; individual spoiling will do it. The individual teachers of Batavia train their subjects to self-confidence, self-reliance, and initiative. The trainer in any physical exercise stays near his pupil; but he throws the pupil to the utmost limit upon his own exertions. The individual teacher is just such a wise and efficient trainer. The real education of the children consists in their training; and training is largely an individual matter. It does not consist in assigning and hearing lessons. That is the way of evading the labors and duties of teaching; that is a way of calling upon children to educate themselves. The injustice that is depopulating schools and break-

ing down education, consists in asking multitudes of unhappy children to educate themselves; of asking them to perform the impossible. There comes a time when the very discipline that the child needs is to be required to address himself to assigned work, and make his own independent preparation. And every trained child welcomes the requirement when it reaches him in due course. When he can face assigned work with confidence and zest, his education and career are assured. Individual teaching has its goal in self-activity; it is not a form of education; it is only an essential factor, which cannot be omitted without wholesale disaster. If we would succeed we must recognize the conditions and laws of success. The Batavia system guards against any unwise or injudicious help by two restricting "don'ts": don't tell the child anything but see that he knows that thing; that is lead his mind; train his attention and train his mind to perceive and apprehend; second, don't do anything for the

child, but see that his work is done by himself; that is, train him to initiative, train him to find the sequent steps in a process. This is to make strong and stalwart, not weak. There is no coddling in individual teaching; the severest of training is that which is given at close range. The individual teacher is fighting for a mind, fighting for a career, and winning the battle every time. It is great teaching; and it makes great teachers; and great teachers can do great teaching. It is great teaching because it is real, because it is rooted and grounded in observation of real childish minds. There are many people who dote upon the quick. Those who bend their attention seriously to the problem of child study, as our individual teachers do, will find many reasons for the existence of slow children. Among other things they are sent to be our teachers; no normal school and no teachers' college can illuminate the understanding and improve the skill of a teacher as can a slow child. "Out of the mouth of babes"

cometh our instruction. It is the slow child who opens the teacher's eyes, when she once assumes that he is not a hopeless blockhead. And a sympathetic teacher learns to thank the momentary unresponsiveness of the child. Where does she see her greatest triumphs? Where does she find her highest gratifications? Where does she recognize the causes of her ripened wisdom and science? In the children who once were slow; in the children who once set her meditating; in the children who once taxed her ingenuity; in the children who once called out her last reserves. The greater the struggle, the more obstinate the obstacle, the greater the triumph.

But the slow child does a higher service to the teacher than opening her mind; he opens her heart. The teacher cannot fail to love the child whom she has won out of trouble. And the teacher who has learned to love a child has learned to love children. And the love of children promotes that sympathy, tolerance,

charity, which are the very crowns of human character. Look over the world for the richest and ripest character; it is the mother who has had the well-spring of her sympathies stirred, who has poured out her life upon others; and after all she is the richest of all. There is a giving that impoverishes not, but mightily enriches the giver. This heart growth, this ripening of the sympathies, is the greatest reward of all that comes to the teacher for being faithful in the discharge of all her sacred duties. A sweet benignity alone is the badge of noble and successful living. And what a power this sweet benignity has for evoking order, contentment, good conduct. Order needs only a rallying point. And what a steady hand and clear eye this sweet benignity has when it comes to weighing an offense; it never sees a mountain in a molehill; it never senses a hurricane in a zephyr. And it always opens the door to reformation, holding sentence in suspension.

The Batavia system has still another check

upon possibly injurious individual attention; the teacher alone decides where her attention will be given; she retains the initiative; the children cannot "work" the teacher; they have the comfort of knowing that their helper will not forget them, but they cannot precipitate the help. They struggle alone with patience until they are reached. And while nothing is looked upon as invidious, yet they have learned to look upon the struggling alone as a compliment. While no one is exposed to discouragement, on the other hand no one can feel vain, for no one knows who will not be called. The prodigy himself is subject to call, and he often needs to be called. This individual work is never employed on forthcoming lessons; the Batavia system is not a coach for indolence, laziness, or even timidity; it is employed solely on children who revealed weakness in previous lessons; it is employed solely on back work; it is leading the children up to the lesson line, but not taking them over it. And even the prodigy

may at times be in arrears. It does under most favorable circumstances what has been attempted before under most distressing circumstances. It brings forward the laggard. Teachers have attempted to bring him forward while a class waited; such an attempt was ruin to the class and actual torture to the laggard, even where it did not end in deliberate persecution.

The elements of the system are not new; individual teaching in some form, and class-teaching, are as old as education. But there are elements that cannot be taken singly without great peril. Class-teaching alone is a side-draught; individual teaching alone is stagnation; together they are a system of thoroughly balanced forces that the Batavia system claims as its principal merit. The high function of the superintendent is to be eyes for his laboring teachers and inspiration to their faithful hearts. A school system sinking under neurasthenia will furnish a world of employment to the superintendent as a mediator in petty collisions,

and leave him little time, strength, or scope for functions truly educational. One great result of the Batavia system is the emancipation of superintendents from details that should never reach him, and his installment in the untrammelled discharge of the real functions of high office. The Batavia system tends to stop multitudinous leaks, to arrest all waste of energy and to promote every high and useful function.

Chapter IX

Organization Humanized

The education that has broken down is the education that has ignored the individual, or reached him only through the mass, and reached him then in the spirit of resentment, because he obstructed the mass. That education is now confronted with one that does not break down; with one that secures the individual first and reaches the mass later; with one that is hospitable; with one that gathers the children to its bosom instead of shaking them off; with one that is fair, honest, and true.

The Batavia system humanizes organization; it prevents organization from becoming a mere machine. But machines are very helpful as the servants of intelligence. The Batavia system recognizes the great value of educational machinery, but it sees to it that the education

of the children is not delegated to a machine. but to intelligent and sympathetic human beings. The individual teaching takes away everything that is procrustean, and adapts its energy to the infinite varieties of mind and temperament. A cold machine treats all alike; whereas what is thoroughly suitable for one may be destructive violence to all the rest. The forest leaves have their underlying type forms, but no two leaves are exactly alike. No two children are exactly alike. We fail in teaching through our tendency to generalize; we assume children that are not before us; there are no average children, and yet generalized education addresses itself to nothing else. If we would educate a people we must address ourselves to John, George, Mary, and Anna; not to boys and girls. Boys and girls are but ghostly abstractions; they are not beings of flesh and blood.

A machine may aid in the manufacture of an Indian shawl or rug, but when the machine

makes the shawl or the rug, the value of the product drops to the inverse ratio of a hundred fold. You cannot grind out men and women for the service of a state; nor can you grind out men and women fitted to taste a real happiness. Teaching is a fine art, and every man worth looking at must bear the impress of some one's loving attention. Teaching is a fine art because it is an adaptive art and a creative one; it is a fine art because of its individualistic application and because of its endeavor to realize the noblest ideals. To treat children as a herd is to render education a mechanism rather than an art.

The Batavia system is the reverse of seeking lines of least resistance. It attacks the points of greatest resistance. It works from the bottom up, instead of from the top, and never getting down; it works from the bottom up and saves all, instead of working from the top and shaking off all below the top line. But can all work up? They can. There is such a thing

as a feeble minded or a defective child who will not respond to ordinary teaching. But it is a grievous error to class slow children with defectives, to put the label of idiocy on people who in a few years may be carrying on the business of the world, and carrying it on with most excellent judgment.

It is a grievous mistake to ascribe to natural defectiveness a mere tardiness of response; it may be the exact reverse; nature is very chary of her Isaac Newtons, her Walter Scotts, her U. S. Grants; she surrounds them with a thicker bud, a richer chrysalis, that their emergence may not be premature.

Chapter X

Necessity of Graded Schools

To determine whether a school system is working from the top or from the bottom, look at the high schools. Would you insure the perpetuity of free institutions, you must make the high schools large and strong; you must keep adolescence under training. The unity and liberty of this great nation cannot be preserved by fourth grade children. Education from the bottom is the only hope of the world; education from the top has had its day.

But how about genius in a school system that works from the bottom, and that would carry all to a common goal? There is such a thing as genius, just as there is such a thing as idiocy; they are the extremes of mentality and spirit. Genius cannot be predicated of all, but talent can be. Genius is very well provided for when

it is associated with active talent. Active talent massed is the greatest educational stimulus for all, the genius as well as the rest. Genius may be wrestling with his own tardy cerements, and active talent massed helps him to tear them off, and active talent then does him a service by giving him something to keep up with.

The race-horse of education finds his needs best supplied in a system that does not address itself to race-horses. Education from the bottom lifts the clogs successively and enables the procession to move. The Batavia system reaches the need of the race-horse by giving him his rein and permitting him to move. It does not keep him champing on the bit and fretting himself into an exhaustion infinitely worse than any race. The Batavia system does not ignore the race-horse; it even assigns to him a very important function. He is permitted to determine the rate of motion for the mass; not that they are all put instantly on to race-horse speed; but they form on him; he

carries the guidon, as it were, and they all conform to a pace which his energy is giving them. Sometimes they even put him on his mettle. The worst thing that could be done for an educational race-horse would be to ask him to go alone, or to go only with a company of race-horses.

To destroy the graded school is to put back the clock of time half a century. Segregation of any kind is only the beginning of retrogression. The solution of the school question is in a forward moving aggregation, and such a forward moving aggregation is ensured by supplementary individual teaching. But there are instances where the same individual is at once a leader and a laggard: that is, he is far ahead in some subjects and backward in others. Such a case was a sore trial to the old graded school, and it usually resulted in placing the pupil on his lowest point of efficiency. Such cases do not disturb the Batavia system at all; the child is placed at his highest point, very much to his

encouragement; he is worked up through his backward matter by individual attention. Herein the needed flexibility is supplied to the graded school without destroying or marring its valuable framework. When you are travelling it is well to be able to look over a map of your journey. The graded school is the map of childhood's progress, fixing his exact location at any point of time, and revealing the ultimate goal. This supplies a great incentive to forward movement. One distressing thing in the district school is the lack of definite stages, and its lack of a definite goal. The child's record is washed away like footprints on the sands of the sea-shore, until he becomes wearied of always slipping back, and always beginning. Organization has worked downward; to the four years of the college were appended the four years of the preparatory or high school; and the eight years of the graded school finally put every child on the way to the university. But under the operation of exclusive class-teaching this noble framework

became a procrustean bed, and we were rushing from all over the world to effect its abolition. The Batavia system saves the graded school; it prevents retrogression. Forward, not backward, must still be the motto of education, as well as that of every other interest in the world. Every teacher considers it an easy contract to deliver any grade without a single gap in the ranks. Prolonged absence alone will now cause a normal pupil to fail of covering his grade. With individual teaching awaiting the absentee, a moderate absence makes now not the slightest disturbance. Under the old system such an absence was disastrous; the sick child queried whether it would make him lose his grade, and the very query aggravated his illness.

And now let me close with a word of prescience and prophecy from another. The Batavia board of education hesitated not to make its own precedent and to give to its children the rescue which individual teaching alone can supply. When asked to appoint the first in-

dividual teacher in the history of education; after hearing the reasons therefor, they promptly appointed her unanimously. President D. W. Tomlinson voiced the thought of all with an alliterative utterance that will ring forever in the literature of education: "That is not only a revelation but a revolution."

Chapter XI

*Benefits Summarized**

Superintendent Kennedy was asked by a reporter for *The News* to enumerate some of the benefits derived from the individual instruction system, which he originated, and the workings of which in the Batavia schools have attracted much attention throughout the country.

“What are the benefits of individual instruction? They are legion. It would take columns merely to state them. To discuss them would require a literature. And I am sure that such a literature is forthcoming. I am sure that the introduction of individual instruction will rank historically as one of the great reforms of this age. People have long been aware of the evils for which individual instruction is proving a sovereign and effective remedy. But they have

*From the *Batavia Daily News*

not seen the remedy. They have almost despaired of a remedy.

“Individual instruction eliminates about all the pressure and over-strain in schoolwork that have been destroying both children and teachers. Where the corrective of individual instruction has been introduced into graded schools the teachers think that it is no longer possible for either children or teachers to break down. It has dispelled all the educational miasma, and has irradiated the schools with the sunshine of happiness. But it has carried sunshine into the homes where chronic misery was wont to reign, where threatened children carried home their unready tasks to torture unready parents.”

Chapter XII

The First Individual Teacher

Lucie Hamilton, the first teacher to use the system, writes as follows.

Batavia as a name has long been recognized to stand not only for a place but also as an *educational idea*. The influence which the town exerts finds its source and continued inspiration in the originator of that idea. Through the key note "Individual Instruction is the New Ideal" sounded by John Kennedy, we have learned that the most successful teaching is not done in *classes* but with *individuals*.

Our daily program moves on with increasing momentum which carries the whole school before it, with no excitement or hysteria, yet with enough enthusiasm for self development.

As a teacher of some experience in the grades of the Batavia schools under the old nerve-

racking, energy-killing method and being the first teacher to take up the work under the new system, I speak in the interests of many over-worked teachers and hundreds of children who are not receiving adequate training.

The plan or system was devised by its originator from necessity and has as its foundation *facts*.

Our success in the work proves that the problem of removing the greatest difficulty in the practical working of the graded school has been removed.

In 1890 the writer was forced through ill health, the result of over-work as a teacher struggling with the difficulties inseparable from the old-time system of class instruction, to give up her work. In 1898 the Batavia System was founded. At this time with health somewhat restored I was recommended by Mr. John Kennedy to the position of first individual instructor in the Batavia schools, which position, however, was taken with some hesitancy

on my part but with positive assurances of success on Mr. Kennedy's part.

Assigned to an over-crowded room having sixty-nine pupils, under the training of a single teacher, whose health was rapidly failing, the work began under the new plan in November, 1898. Possible dangers were foreseen by Prof. Kennedy in connection with the work of the individual teacher and there were possible misapprehensions that might bring about criticisms; so to us were given three *Don'ts*.

"First, Don't tell a child anything but see that he knows it."

"Second, Don't do anything for a child but see that it is done."

"Third, Don't do anything upon a lesson that has not been recited."

Through these "don'ts" the individual instructor guarded against the danger of doing the work for the pupils instead of teaching them how to do it. The individual teacher comes to

realize that the largest part of his work is to *build* and not *repress*.

From the first the originator of this system declared that individual instruction would never be the normal form of teaching but that children must be assembled in classes, drilled, trained and educated in the presence of their classmates, because they need the spur of competition. But the results are not to be secured by class instruction *alone*. The Batavia system discloses the fact that children apparently defective are often those whose minds are brighter than the average and for this reason require a different and peculiar development which can only be given by individual instruction.

Under the old system we mechanized the work of instruction and training, made all pupils do the same work at the same time, in the same way. This was the tendency of teachers who were young and inexperienced and some times the tendency of teachers not young and inexperienced. *Then* we scattered

abundant seed but reaped but little or meager harvest. We were careful of the type but careless of the single life.

It is in individual work that a knowledge of each pupil can be utilized. Teaching can thus be adapted to special needs; patience with one, firmness with another, trained attention here, cultivation of memory there, stimulation of confidence with some and a proper guidance for all. Today under the new system we think less of our schools and more about the *boy* or *girl*, knowing that the mass will take care of itself if the individual is properly cared for. We also get a proper recognition of the personality of the child through this work. The child has a new value. The dull pupil, the laggard was found and has been reached and in many cases we see him the leader of his class.

Most satisfactory results have been secured in the Batavia schools under the Batavia system during these fifteen years. Each year, during that time I have been anchored to a

given room in some one of our many schools; sometimes to a two-teacher room with two grades, then again to a room with two teachers and one grade or perhaps one grade with one teacher. Always the same satisfactory results, seeing the system extended to the relief of many rooms, receiving commendations and endorsements from those who are foremost in educational work in the land.

But the system is not confined to the Batavia schools. Several of our teachers have been called to the colleges in other states to present the work. Some few years ago a request came from the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, to Mr. Kennedy asking for two teachers to be sent from the Batavia schools to present the Batavia system to the teachers assembled for summer school work at Charlottetsville.

Miss Martha Ferry, principal of one of the Batavia schools and the writer of this article were honored with the assignment to the work for a period of six weeks. Great interest was

manifested in the plan and its practical workings with the seventy teachers who made up the classes for class instruction and individual work, and we left the University knowing that the future fruits of our work would reflect credit on the Batavia schools as a source of a far reaching reform. From this experience of 15 years of individual instruction as a supplement and corrective to class teaching I am forced to regard it an imperative educational reform.

Chapter XIII

Experience of Another Individual Teacher

I have had eleven years experience teaching in the Batavia schools under the Batavia system of Individual Instruction. Most of my teaching has been done in the fifth and sixth grades doing both class-teaching and individual instruction myself. During this time the pupils of these grades with the help of individual instruction, have not only been able to make one grade in one year but some have gained two grades in one year, the bright as well as the slow child being helped.

I have also taught three summers in the School of Observation in the University of Pennsylvania at Philadelphia, Pa., demonstrating the Batavia Individual Instruction System. My work was visited and observed by many superintendents, principals, teachers

and students from the various parts of the country who became so much interested that many requests were made for literature pertaining to the Batavia System and for daily programs of the work of all the grades. These were carefully studied and worked out in many of the schools it was afterward reported that the Batavia System had been adopted in their schools.

ANNA K STEIN.

Chapter XIV

*Views of a New York Superintendent**

To the Honorable, the Board of Education:

Gentlemen: Your committee report: That on the 13th and 14th inst they made an exhaustive investigation into the general plan and details of the methods of organization and instruction as now carried out in the schools of Batavia, visiting every department in the central school building, from the lowest grade primary through the high school.

By request of the other members of your committee your Superintendent remained two full days, devoting three evenings to consultation involving every phase of the work, with Superintendent Kennedy, visiting every school room in the seven school buildings of the town, observing minutely the plan of instruction in

*Report of Barney Whitney to the Ogdensburg board of education

every grade of the schools, and interviewing at least thirty of the teachers.

Your committee without reserve express their unqualified appreciation and approval of the organization and methods pursued.

The entire absence of unrest, inattention, listlessness, or any form of disorder on the part of pupils; or of severity, reproof, or even reference to conduct or application on the part of the teachers, was a most agreeable surprise. No harshness, no reproaches or threats, no invidious comparisons, no sarcasm or reproachful remarks were observed nor would such treatment be tolerated. So manifest were these conditions that a representative of the Department of Public Instruction, who had just closed his visit to these schools, commending upon the above, said to me on my arrival, "They have no discipline in these schools." What he meant was, it is the highest form of discipline. The scholarship, intelligence, self-reliance, discipline, cheerfulness, and devotion to work, surpassed

anything we ever heretofore observed. We sought diligently for the causes which lead to such marked efficiency and are clear in our judgment that they are attributable, mainly, to the plan of organized individual instruction as the supplement and corrective of exclusive class instruction.

The great defect of our educational system is in making complete provision for the masses upon the false assumption of equality in the nature, conditions and environment of children; and its conspicuous failure to meet individual needs by a disregard of the fact that the nature, circumstances and environment of the children are as various as the children themselves.

The remedy—the equity, the special means of relief, in our educational system—is to be found in organized individual instruction as the supplement and corrective of exclusive class instruction. This is in the direction of the present movement of education viz: “Constructive Individualism.”

The Batavia experiment is based upon the recognition of this principle. It assumes that every normal child can be brought forward even above the average, and be effectively educated. It assumes that the worry, discouragement, pressure and overstrain of teachers and pupils may be practically eliminated from the school room, and that nearly all can be promoted from grade to grade, and that the incentives or necessity for placing pupils beyond their grade rarely occur. It claims that their system of instruction eradicates from the schools practically all the dull pupils, the stupid, the laggards, and that the bright pupils find it all they can do to keep in touch—to keep up—with the heretofore slow pupil. It was the purpose of your committee in their investigations to discover the truth in relation to these claims.

The plan of instruction assumes two forms, or rather is applied under two different conditions. In over-crowded rooms an additional teacher is employed to do silent work—indi-

vidual instruction—devoting her entire time to this form of work; while the teacher in charge devotes her entire time to class instruction. We found not the slightest confusion or interruption of the two teachers in the same room. This plan is ideal and unquestionably produces, on the whole, a slightly higher degree of efficiency. It saves the division of pupils and providing an additional room; and a large number of pupils can be easily and satisfactorily handled. There are six rooms thus supplied. In rooms in which there are not more pupils than one teacher can efficiently instruct, which includes all rooms except the six mentioned, the teacher gives both forms of instruction, devoting one-half the time to each, the periods of individual and class instruction in each subject alternating.

This plan does in no way increase the teaching force or expense. It works admirably and gives excellent satisfaction. It secures vastly superior results in every phase and condition of school

work to the old plan of exclusive class instruction.

Not the slightest embarrassment or friction attends this plan. Ample time is found for accomplishing all the work. Pupils, by means of individual instruction, rapidly acquire greater ability in class instruction. The teacher, also by the method pursued, acquires greater power in class instruction and accomplishes more in the lessened number of recitation periods than could be obtained under the plan of exclusive class instruction.

The special business of the individual teacher is to find the weak spots in each individual pupil and make them the strong spots. It is marvelous what aptitude a slow, or so-called dull pupil, manifests when discouragement is removed and when once aroused to the consciousness of his or her ability; and such pupils almost invariably assume a position among the strongest and most reliable pupils in the class. We searched for the slow and dull pupil, but failed to find one.

We inquired for pupils who were at first slow of apprehension and apparently weak in the mastery of a subject. We had such thoroughly tested and were surprised at the clearness and mastery of the subject in hand.

We had also pupils tested who were unusually apt upon entering the schools, that we might make a comparison in the work accomplished and ability to clearly comprehend the work in hand. We found little, if any, disparity in the two classes of pupils. Indeed the stronger and so-called bright pupils are more frequently found among the aroused pupils who at first were slow and possibly considered dull. It is the simplest plan or method possible. It does not disturb the organization of the school in the least; it requires only a slight modification of the programme. It is in harmony with the graded system. It is only slightly modified in its application. It is assumed that the best results can be secured in and through the graded system by a slight modification of it in its application.

> This plan of work is now and has been for nearly three years in complete operation in all the schools, primary, grammar and high school. The testimony of every teacher is, without the slightest hesitation or reservation, pronounced in favor of the present plan of organization and instruction. A proposition to abandon the present mode of instruction and return to the former plan would be met with the most emphatic protest from the teachers, pupils and patrons.

The doctrine of ministration, personal service, has found its way into their schools. Too exclusive administration, regulating, dictating, has been the bane of our public schools. A new dispensation of service is dawning upon our educational system.

The walls of every room in the grades are literally lined with written work embracing every subject of instruction in the respective grades. This work is of a higher order of excellence than is to be found in any class of schools we have ever examined.

We are fully prepared from an examination of the written work, the class exercises and tests given, together with the record in the high school to accept the united testimony of superintendent and teachers, that, with rare exceptions, all pupils can be moved simultaneously from grade to grade and that by their plan of instruction, semi-annual promotions and doubling of classes in a grade are unnecessary.

The increased standings obtained in Regents' examinations in the high school the past year, i. e., the number who passed, the number receiving honors and the number receiving 100 in many of the advanced subjects were 50 per cent. higher than the year before. These results I took from the records of the institution. They are attributable directly to the influence of individual instruction.

The plan is so simple that it can be introduced into any school room, and any conscientious, progressive, and intelligent teacher can secure incomparably better results than by the plan of exclusive class instruction.

This plan of instruction, instead of producing dependence, as is sometimes erroneously supposed, produces just the reverse. We have never seen more independent thinking and self-reliant pupils than in the Batavia schools.

This experiment is attracting wide-spread attention. At the State Council of superintendents in New York state, last October, and at the recent National Superintendents' meeting in Chicago, at both of which Superintendent Kennedy was invited to present this matter, intense interest has been aroused. Dr. G. Stanley Hall, president of the Clark university said: "Individual instruction sounds the key-note of education for the next decade."

State Superintendent Skinner has officially endorsed the plan. The Department of Public Instruction and Department of the Regents sent representatives to Batavia. They unqualifiedly endorsed the plan.

F. Thiselton Mark, Professor of Pedagogy, Birmingham, England, was sent to this country

last year as a representative of the English government, to inspect certain phases of school work in our country. He examined with great care the organization and methods at Bataiva and gave them his emphatic endorsement and said: "These methods will revolutionize the schools of England."

This method is now being introduced into the schools in the vicinity of Batavia, and other localities are arranging to introduce the same method.

Your committee, therefore, unaimously recommend the immediate introduction of individual instruction as the supplement and corrective of class instruction into such school rooms as can be under immediate personal supervision of the Superintendent with a view to its further introduction in the near future into all the public schools of the city.

Chapter XV

*A Philadelphia View**

This is the story of what came from a crowded schoolroom in the pleasant town of Batavia, in western New York. Back of it is the rare common sense of one thoughtful mind incorporate in a man by the name of John Kennedy. In front of it lies a well-nigh limitless sweep of possibilities, which, by a simple change in the present system of public education, may be productive of benefits beyond value to mankind.

I call it the story of a crowded schoolroom because it was such that gave John Kennedy his opportunity to make a practical test of a theory he had evolved after many years of experience as a teacher in public schools.

He saw that education was not educating,

*Leigh Hedges in the *Philadelphia North American*. The article begins with a quotation from Prof. O'Shea of the University of Wisconsin.

but he didn't sit by and sigh because of this. He went to work with that one tool a man has which will carve destiny—his brain. And after he'd thought it all out, the chance came just as it always does.

Opportunity is ever waiting around the corner for the man who uses his gray matter.

In 1898 John Kennedy was superintendent of schools in Batavia. He is yet, despite offers of positions at increased salary. In November of that year—mark the date, for the time may come when the other events of that cycle, historic as they were, will sink into comparative insignificance beside this—a certain room in the public schools was overflowing with boys and girls. It was not actually crowded; indeed, it would have held more than were in it, but there were too many pupils for the one teacher.

As the room space was large enough to accommodate more children, the superintendent resolved to suggest to the Board of Education a bold experiment in education. He advised

the board not to remove the excess of children, but to bring in a second teacher to bring forward the laggards by means of individual instruction.

He argued that this would lift the strain entirely from the class teacher and give her all the relief she needed; that it would free the class work from all clogging and enable it to move freely, smoothly and steadily forward; that it would bring many unhappy children out of pitiful and dangerous distress; that it would remove worry from both children and teacher, conducing to the health, happiness, confidence and ambition of all; that it would substitute complete success for failure, and that it would reduce the expense of carrying on schools.

He told me the other day the members of that board at first looked at him as if doubtful for the moment of his sanity.

Two teachers in one room! Who ever heard of such a thing! And how in the world could such a simple innovation be productive of results so radical and far-reaching!

But they believed in the man standing before them, and they adopted his recommendation. Somehow the importance of the step they were authorizing seemed to be apparent to them, and after they had formally launched the new idea, and recovered from the effects of the shock the president said, "Gentlemen, this is not only a revelation, but a revolution."

The names of the historic board who appointed the first individual teacher in the history of education are D. W. Tomlinson, J. J. Washburn, John Holley Bradish, John M. McKenzie, Robert B. Pease and Hobart B. Cone. I think that not only the history of education but also the history of humanity, civil order and civil liberty will yet make appropriate record and grateful mention of the service of John Kennedy and these men.

The woman they appointed was Miss Lucie Hamilton. She had been completely worn out by a life of teaching in public schools. When Professor Kennedy approached her with the

proposition, she looked at him in amazement.

"What do you mean?" she gasped. "Why, I'm a nervous and physical wreck from teaching!"

"I mean that I want you to begin this work next Monday as a personal favor to me," he answered, "and to continue it after a month's trial as a personal favor to yourself!"

So this Batavia system—it is now known as that the world over—was to be of benefit to teachers as well as children.

Miss Hamilton's instructions were, find the most backward children and make them the most forward. She has been doing this for nearly eight years now; she doesn't know she has such a thing as a nerve, and the system of which she was the first expositor has transformed the schools in Batavia and become the foremost in the broad realm of education.

She has proved beyond all question that whole grades can be lined up and moved forward without perceptible dragging and without

any losses at all. She has proved that education can educate. She has proved that physical, intellectual and moral tragedy may be entirely eliminated from education, and that no one need look upon a schoolhouse with a shudder.

When she entered upon her work the room contained fifty-four pupils. It has since contained as high as eighty-five, very much to the gratification of all concerned. And so well has she performed her assigned function that after she has found the most backward children it becomes impossible for other people to find them.

Just what is this system which has so interested the world as to bring to Batavia every week representatives of schools from various parts of the country and other countries as remote as the Argentine Republic and Japan?

Briefly it is as follows: In schoolrooms with an enrolment of from fifty to eighty children two teachers are employed. One of these is the class teacher, who gives instruction to the

classes, conducts the recitations, and is responsible for the maintenance of discipline, the keeping of records and the general machinery of the school.

The other teacher in a way is co-ordinate with the class teacher, but she uses all her time in working at a desk with individual pupils who are found by the class teacher to be backward or who, for any reason, are failing to keep up their standing in the class.

By this method the two teachers work as one; they recognize that the work of the school is a dual process, in which both teachers play an important part. The one supplements the work of the other; the work of recitation does not drag, while the child who is weak or needs assistance knows where and how to get it under the best and most helpful conditions.

In schoolrooms with the usual number of pupils, from thirty to forty-five, the teacher divides her time, taking half for class and half for individual instruction. In this way the

plan works as well as with two teachers, and the efficiency of the school is materially increased instead of being lessened.

The Batavia system assumes that a normal child is able to do the work of the school, providing the school is carried on normally and under equitable conditions. It is based on two Don'ts: 1, don't tell the child anything, but see that he discovers it for himself; 2, don't do anything for him, but see that he does it for himself.

It does away with putting the "square boy into the round hole and the round boy into the square hole." It maintains the grades of the school without inflexibility and gives all the advantages of the graded system without its grind and usual want of adjustability.

The anaemic and neurasthenic child has a chance to go to school and get the education to which he is entitled without the draft on his body which prevents natural growth and without the nervous dread of failure to make promotion which bears so heavily on some children.

The plan enables the school to do its best work in school hours. The home is relieved of the burden entailed by having to give the child additional instruction there. Under the Batavia plan the school prepares to meet the failures of the child in a rational and intelligent way: with the result that when the school day is over the child goes home to spend his time in recreation or other employment, confident that he can meet the demands of his school successfully on the morrow.

This plan brings the school in touch with the child in a way not often realized through the ordinary method. The teacher discovers facts of temperament, environment and circumstances affecting progress rarely if ever ascertained in the usual run of school life. The method invites confidence. The child comes to know the ground upon which he stands, and will respond to the efforts of the teacher to help him in a way usually wholly unexpected.

"Since we introduced the Batavia system,"

said Professor Kennedy to me, "we are seeing our slow ones springing to the front and leading the companies. We are almost inclined to think that slowness of mind is an evidence *prima facie* of latent superiority. At any rate, we take the children just as they come to us from the hands of their Maker, and we make no invidious comparisons or distinctions. We say to all the children: 'Come let us climb.' And they climb; every one of them. We never break a grade.

"They have done such fine climbing since we introduced the system that they have flooded our high schools and all our upper grades. We are growing where we should grow—at the top. The increase in our first primary grade this year is less than 2 per cent. The increase in all our grades, including the first primary, exceeds 10 per cent. That is due to climbing and I can scarcely take you into any class that is not black with boys."

The schoolrooms in which there are two

teachers are just like those we have all been used to except that they have two teachers' desks instead of one. The whole system is founded on such a simple idea that one going through the Batavia schools and seeing what wonders have been wrought cannot keep back the question, "Why didn't some one think of it before?"

In one room I visited, while the regular class teacher went on with her work, a boy of 11, with a strong suspicion of trouble on his face, walked to the desk of the individual teacher to be helped out of a difficulty. Under the ordinary system this lad would have been compelled to wait for assistance until the pending recitation was finished or possibly until the end of the day's session, when a tired teacher would have done her best to aid him.

Now, however, there awaited him a sweet-faced woman who was there for the very purpose of giving him the lift he needed. And how did she do this? By speaking a few words of wis-

dom? No. She asked him a question which brought a frown to his face. He couldn't answer it, so she asked him another, but with the same result. Then came a third and a fourth, but no more. The fourth had touched the magic spot and the boy's answer, accompanied by a smile that told the whole story, showed that it was all smooth sailing, at least for the present.

The class had not been interrupted in the least; the boy was unfettered and ready to keep step with his companions, and the second teacher was ready for the next seeker.

And it is not only in the schoolroom or in school work that this system is showing remarkable results. You see it on the streets of Batavia. When I first visited the place, and before I had ever heard of such a thing as its system of education, I was impressed with the general good behavior of the boys on the streets. There was such a lack of rowdyishness that I remarked upon the fact to a resident.

"That's due to the Batavia system," he said.

I had gone up there to report a heresy trial, but I remained to look into this notable innovation which has aptly been called by some one "Educational Christianity".

Titusville and Hazelton have adopted it officially. In many places in Ohio, Wisconsin, Illinois and other Western and Northern states, and in Canada it has proved as much of a success as in the town of its birth, and at present New York city is investigating it with a view to its adoption.

And in the meantime John Kennedy is flooded with invitations to go here, there and the other place to introduce this plan of untold possibilities which has for its parents his brain and a crowded schoolroom, and may yet prove to be the panacea for many of our modern ills.

Chapter XVI

*Views of a Michigan Superintendent**

To the honorable Board of Education:

; Gentlemen—Something over a year ago, in connection with the matter of some overcrowded rooms, I brought to your notice the possibility of taking care of the rooms according to the so-called “Batavia Plan” of individual instruction. At that time it was decided to be expedient to relieve the difficulty in another way. Since then several members of the board have expressed themselves as much interested in the plan. Therefore I took the opportunity, while visiting Batavia as a member of your special committee to examine a number of modern school buildings, to look very carefully into the workings of the Batavia plan.

Report of Supt. E. D. Palmer to the West Bay City Board of Education

The public school grew out of the principle that the citizens of a republic must be educated to be safe administrators of its affairs, while the graded form the schools have taken came from the necessity of furnishing progressive stages of educational work for the children of the schools, that many might be engaged on the same work at the same time under the directions of the same teacher—a question chiefly of economy, of effort and of money.

It was always known that children were not all alike in aptitude nor in capacity; but the most of them were enough alike in many ways to make gradation and a certain degree of uniform progress possible. But because its administrators while they recognized and deplored saw no way to obviate it, the difference in individual children—the genius and the slow child alike—was ignored in the system. While every teacher—every teacher with a heart—for a time struggles to save the child that is different, that has any originality of character, at length

she succumbs to the current and is overborne, and with a heart full of anguish sees the children for whom she spends and is spent, drift out of teach, out of school, and out to sea.

Nor have prominent educators been less concerned, but they found the condition existing when they began their work, they have sought diligently for a remedy, and in despair the most of them have settled down to the conviction that there is no cure, and content themselves with trying to render the suffering as tolerable as possible; while a few go further and affirm that some persons are foreordained to a mental damnation, as it has been believed some were to a moral. The consistent sequence of which is that the earlier the teacher discovers those predestined to mental death and precipitates the end, the better for the elect and the school at large.

Meantime some noble souls have clung to the idea that there are no dull pupils, if teachers were but wise enough to know how to reach

them. Teachers have tried various expedients; detaining pupils after school to help them (which could hardly be separated in the child's mind from a benevolent sort of punishment), sparing a few minutes during the day to help some struggling one, setting aside a period in the programme for individual help, taking occasionally a class period for assisting children at their desks, assigning an advanced pupil to show younger ones, and so on.

A few attempts at the solution of the problem of the backward pupil are more noteworthy than the rest. The German "blocking system" of alternating class and study-periods is an old one. The "pupil-teacher system" of England has attracted much attention, a kind of cadet system, in which pupils of the upper class regularly assist in the school work, receiving a small compensation. A plan tried at Hartford, Conn., was to select the most backward of each room for a class and assign them to a separate teacher who would try to bring up the awkward squad

so it could march with the rest of the company. At Providence, Rhode Island, the plan went farther and all backward pupils of a building were assembled in one room in charge of a teacher who did what she could for them, thus allowing the brighter pupils to go unhampered. This might be called the "hospital-for-crippled minds plan". There must be a good deal of inspiration and soul-uplift for the children set aside in a room under those conditions!

Then there is the Batavia plan. It is so radically different from the others, and the literature on the subject is so misleading, that a rather careful examination of its history and method is necessary, which is fully justified by the results it can show. The Batavia system is (like the graded school system as a whole) also an evolution. A little over five years ago a second and third grade room became overcrowded. It had been overcrowded before and had always been relieved in the usual ways, by forcing a few children into the next grade, or

organizing a new room. The superintendent proposed to place a second teacher in the room, one teacher to take the classes and the other to help individuals. Thus the Batavia experiment began.

The plan worked. When another room became overcrowded the same arrangement was made, until now the plan pervades the whole system of schools—that is to say, in six of about 24 grade rooms two teachers carry on the alternation of class and individual instruction, while in the other 18 rooms there is a single teacher doing the same thing. Perhaps I should say, to prevent a misconception, that two teachers to a room is not an essential part of the Batavia plan. It can be operated just as well with one teacher, but with two teachers there is an economy of expenditure for equipment, heating, etc., as it dispenses with an extra room. The two-teacher arrangement is the most conspicuous thing to a superficial observer, and the word has gone out that the Batavia plan con-

sists in putting two teachers in a room. I dare say that this very thing has put back its general adoption for five years. On the face of it two teachers to a room in most cities on a general scale is out of the question, and superintendents, understanding this to be essential, will not give the cause a hearing. As a matter of fact, when I went to examine the system I thought the general theory of individual instruction an ideal one, but was skeptical as to its applicability to a system like ours. I went to investigate upon the simple faith that "what man hath done, man can do." The first room I visited had but one teacher; I asked to see her programme; I watched her work; then the whole matter was clear. I saw one teacher at work with one grade, two teachers with one grade, two teachers with two grades, and one teacher with two grades, and I am convinced that a room that one teacher can handle with our present system can be handled with the Batavia system, with better results and with less demand both on the children and on the teacher.

The central idea is a stated period for individual instruction to alternate with class work. The class work is necessary as a tonic; the child needs it that he may measure himself by others; he needs it for the audience it gives when he recites; and the teacher needs it as a means of determining results. The individual instructor is necessary for the child that can not yet express himself intelligibly in class; for the child that has not learned how to study, or whose power of concentration has not been trained; for the child that is discouraged or diffident; for the child that is slow to catch a point and has not a ready answer in class. Some children come to the individual instructor for a single lesson; some come regularly for several days; some seldom or never come. Her time is for those who need it most.

The relation between the two teachers in a room is interesting and vital. Neither is an assistant. They are co-ordinate in their work; but the responsibility of discipline and adminis-

tration is lodged with one of them—sometimes with the class teacher, sometimes with the individual teacher.

When one teacher has one grade, her programme is arranged with alternate periods of classes and individual work. When two teachers have one grade it is divided into two sections doing the same work, and is operated in all respects like two grades; one teacher does all the class work and the other all the individual work. The programme of the class teacher looks exactly like our programmes, with two sections in a room. The individual teacher simply does the work of the subject that recites next. With one teacher and two grades the classes recite alternate days.

As to results, let me summarize them: (1) There are no pupils that fail to pass. (2) Children of the grades do not have to take home books to study. (3) The teachers are happy and so are the children. (4) Absence from school has been greatly reduced. (5) The

grammar grades are as full as the lower grades except for the difference in mortality. (6) Discipline nearly takes care of itself. (7) There is no scolding or sharp word for failure in class. (8) The work on all subjects in all grades is remarkably uniform, showing that there are no longer any backward pupils. (9) The high school has doubled in three years.

There are a number of questions that are invariably asked me by those with whom I have talked of this matter. Some of these I have answered above. Others are these:

The business man asks: "How about the expense?" In Batavia they are saving \$2,000 a year by the plan. With one teacher in a room there would of course be no difference. With two teachers and 75 or 80 pupils in a room heating, janitor, etc.

The teacher asks: "Does it not mean more work?" No, less. First, worry is gone, and worry kills more than work. If a pupil does not understand the work in hand, or is absent,

the teacher does not worry, and the class time is not taken up with explanations that the others are not interested in. Then, since there is no time wasted in needless explanations, in the class, the teacher does not feel driven for time and can get more done with less friction. The same thing applies when the same teacher is alternately class teacher and individual instructor, while at the same time the alternating work rests her.

Another asks: "Are specially constructed buildings needed?" No, but if two teachers are to be employed the rooms should be a little larger. A new eight-room ward school nearly ready for service at Batavia, and the only one constructed with this system in view, has rooms 26x35 feet, the same length and only a foot wider than in our Kolb school. These will be opened with one teacher in a room. If conditions require it, they are large enough for two teachers.

"Is not the bright pupil overlooked in this

plan?" No. He needs no individual help except at rare intervals, but the removal from his neck of the killing weight of the slow pupil allows him to go his gait. The old system kills the spirit of the ambitious, quick boy, who must barely creep to allow his slower brother to keep up, and so he dawdles along and becomes ruined as a student, for he has no incentive.

"Does not individual instruction make the backward pupil dependent?" No. The instructor has it in her hands to control that. The help she gives, or should give, is the help of teaching how to study.

"Can the plan be used in the high school?" Yes. It has been in the Batavia high school for two years.

"Can it be applied in West Bay City?" Yes. as well as anywhere, but it should be introduced gradually, as teachers catch its spirit and understand its methods. Our semi-annual promotions would need to be abandoned, which could not be done suddenly.

"Are other cities adopting the plan?" Yes. Racine, Wisconsin, has just adopted it in full. Titusville, and Hazelton, Pa., Ashtabula, Ohio, Peterborough and Montreal, in Canada, Ogdensburg, N. Y., and other places are working under this plan. New York City and Buffalo are are taking the matter up, while educators everywhere are talking about it or going to investigate. I have here letters, reports, newspaper and magazine articles, all to the same effect, which I must not take the time to read to you, but which are at your service.

In conclusion, gentlemen, I have the honor—and I esteem it highly—to recommend that the "Batavia plan" of individual instruction be adopted for the West Bay City schools, to be introduced gradually, as the way opens. Should this board approve the system, West Bay City will be the first city in Michigan to inaugurate it, and its operation here is sure to be watched with much interest.

Chapter XVII.

*Testimony of a Batavia Principal**

Many people have asked me to give testimony regarding the benefits of individual instruction in public school teaching on the plans promulgated by Mr. Kennedy and as introduced by him into the Batavia schools.

I have invariably stated that it is the only scientific and practical method of conducting the schools and it is due to this system that the Batavia schools take the rank to which by practical educators they are assigned. From my experience it is the only method which reduces the friction in school rooms, lessens the labor of the teachers, and promotes a higher average of scholarship in the grades.

It has been my pleasure as well as my good fortune to have served under Mr. Kennedy at

*From Martha Ferry, Principal of Washington Avenue School, Batavia

the very inception of this system and to have seen its growth until it has now become established and successful. I have taught in rooms with one teacher and with two teachers and have had good results under both conditions.

I was much pleased to be one of two teachers who went to Charlottesville, Virginia, to demonstrate the system in the summer school at the University there; and from letters received after my return I believe it was accepted with favor.

As principal of one of the largest grade schools here I can bear testimony to the system's worth and value both to the pupils and to the teachers.

Chapter XVIII

*An Indiana View**

Sup't J. K. Beck of the city schools, who is always on the lookout for the best interests of the Bloomington schools, has made his report to the school trustees on the instruction system used in the Batavia (New York) schools. The school board after hearing the report has decided to adopt the system here, which is best explained in Mr. Beck's report which the *World* publishes in full. * * *

"Resolution of the Board: 'It is hereby resolved that this Board accepts the superintendent's report; heartily and unanimously endorses the Batavia plan; and orders its introduction into the eight elementary grades of the public schools as rapidly as possible.'

WILLIAM A. RAWLES

Secretary Board of Education
Bloomington, Indiana.

*From the Bloomington, Ind., *Evening World*

The adoption of the Batavia system called out from Walter Bradfute of the Bloomington *Telephone* the following comments.

"It is not often a more interesting or important article appears in the *Telephone* than that of yesterday on the Batavia system to be introduced into the Bloomington schools, signed by Professor Rawles, secretary of our school board. If half promised is accomplished, it will be a lasting blessing—in these later days when going to school seems often a method of punishment more than to benefit the child. The absurd 'high standing' theory has driven about half of our children out of the schools at the age when they should be there doing the most good. It should be made a crime, punished by the law, for any child in the lower grades to be compelled to study out of school hours. When only a small per cent. of all the children even get into the high school it's time somebody had the practical sense to ask the question—why? When less than 10 in 100 boys and girls go higher

than the grades—is it the fault of the child or the system?

“What per cent. of our own boys are high school graduates? Then why? Little children carrying home their books to study at night—afraid of ‘red marks’—it’s too absurd to think about.

“The new system that our school board proposes to introduce has every mark of common sense, and it looks like it was formulated by somebody who thought more of the child and its welfare than ‘higher education’ and the fads that land 99 out of 100 outside the college walls.

“So we say that in introducing this new school system of only common sense, Prof. Beck and our school board will have the thanks and appreciation of parents generally in this community.”

Chapter XIX

A Wisconsin Adoption

The schools of Racine, Wis., have themselves become a model to be studied by educators on account of the adoption of the "Batavia System," as will be seen by the following excerpt from a recent issue of the *Racine News*:

"For years the schools of Racine have been a source of pride to the residents of the beautiful Belle City of the lakes, but of later years this pride has become more marked, and justly so. Whenever anything new is brought up in educational circles it catches the eye of the local public school officials and if they find it to be possessed of merit it is adopted without delay. One example of this is the individual system of instruction adopted here some time ago, and it has proven most gratifyingly successful. This system was in vogue in Batavia, N. Y., and the

school commissioners desiring to have a thorough investigation made into its merits appointed a committee of competent educators to make a trip of inspection through the schools of the eastern city. Their report was a favorable one and the consequence was that the system was introduced here. Since that time educators from other cities have been here to inspect this method of instruction and men prominently identified with the school work in Racine have made speeches on the subject in other cities."

Chapter XX

*A Revelation and a Revolution**

"This is not only a revelation but a revolution."

These were the words of President Daniel W. Tomlinson of the Batavia Board of Education, spoken one November evening in 1898 when Professor John Kennedy closed the first exposition that he ever made of the principles of Individual Instruction. Those present were, besides President Tomlinson, J. J. Washburn, Robert B. Pease, John Holley Bradish, John M. McKenzie and Herbert B. Cone, together with P. P. Bradish who was clerk of the Board.

It was a strange and unprecedented suggestion that Professor Kennedy had made. In the central school building there was an overcrowded room, causing work too great for the

*Chester E. Platt, editor *Batavia Evening Times*

teacher. The method of the past had been in such cases to divide the room and provide another teacher. The conviction came to Professor Kennedy that another room was not needed.

For many years he had been studying the problems of education. He had known the evils of class instruction. He had seen teachers break down under the strain of trying to keep the backward children spurred up so that they might not impede the progress of the whole class. He had seen the backward children made sullen and discouraged by class instruction methods not adapted to their needs. He outlined to the Board a remedy for these evils. He suggested a second teacher for the room, a teacher whose duty should be to bring the backward children forward. His earnest words carried conviction. The Board was profoundly impressed, and saw a vision of the future which caused President Tomlinson to say "This is not only a revelation but a revolution."

Although it was an experiment without precedent the Board without hesitation unanimously passed a resolution providing that a teacher should be engaged for Individual Instruction, as recommended by Professor Kennedy, and the Batavia System, now known around the world, was inaugurated.

The Professor was asked to recommend a teacher for the work. He recommended Miss Lucie Hamilton. She was ill at the time, suffering from a nervous breakdown, the result of overwork as a teacher struggling with the difficulties inseparable from the old-time system of class instruction. A member of the Board reminded Professor Kennedy of this, but he declared that Miss Hamilton was just the teacher that he wished for the position, and that he believed that she would be available, and she was.

But it was not without some hesitation on her part, and positive assurances of success on Professor Kennedy's part, that Miss Hamilton

became the first individual teacher in the public schools of this country, a position in which she has won well deserved distinction.

Foreseeing possible dangers in connection with the work of the individual teacher, and foreseeing possible misapprehensions that might call out criticisms, Professor Kennedy laid down three paradoxical Don't's.

"First, Don't tell a child anything, but see that he knows it.

"Second, Don't do anything for the child, but see that it is done.

"Third, Don't do anything on a lesson that has not been recited."

The object of these don'ts was to guard against the danger of doing work for pupils, instead of teaching them how to do if got themselves. It was not intended that the individual teacher should be a mere coach to assist scholars in preparing their lessons. The aim of individual instruction is to help the child of slow

mental power to acquire the power of independent study.

In the realm of business Frederick W. Taylor has started a revolution by his exposition of the principles of scientific management, applied to manufacturing establishments. All can appreciate the waste of material things which our national policy of conservation aims to correct. Not so many appreciate the still larger waste of human effort going on in connection with all our manufacturing establishments, although the daily loss is greater from this source than from the waste of material things.

In the educational world John Kennedy of Batavia started a revolution twelve years ago, by calling attention to the great loss which we suffer through the inefficiency of the teaching in our public schools. To correct the necessary evils of class instruction and to increase the general efficiency of school work the Batavia system of Individual Instruction was devised. At the outset Professor Kennedy declared that

Individual Instruction would never be the prime method of education, nor even the normal form of teaching. He said that children must be assembled in classes, and drilled, trained and educated in the presence of their fellows.

Thus only can they get the needed spur of competition. But Professor Kennedy also pointed out that the best results cannot be accomplished by class instruction alone. Many pupils do not grasp principles readily from a presentation that may be best adapted for the entire class. In every class there are those who lag behind others, and classes are held back from making proper progress on account of the slow pupils. But less than one per-cent of these slow pupils are mental defectives, who cannot master the subject which the class is studying. A considerable proportion have some physical defect which the teacher of the class would perhaps never discover, but which the individual teacher finds out at once and can often take steps to remedy. Very often children are found

to be suffering from defective sight or hearing, anaemia, malnutrition, or the presence of adenoids or other abnormal growths.

But the most important thing disclosed by the Batavia system is, that children apparently defective are often those whose minds are better than the average, and who for this reason require a different and peculiar development, which only individual instruction can give. Some children have highly developed brains which make extraordinary demand upon the blood supply and upon the nervous system which makes them seem incompetent, when in reality they are superior.

Sir Isaac Newton's own mother declared he had no capacity to fix his mind upon sensible things. In ordinary schools, he would have been at the foot of the class, a drag upon the other children and a source of irritation to his teacher. But in the Batavia schools, or in other schools which have adopted the Batavia system his genius would have been detected.

Precocious ability is no sure sign of greatness, and brains that seem to show up very badly in extreme youth often turn out to be the best.

Chapter XXI

*The Present View in Batavia**

Every one at all conversant with the public graded schools of the last quarter century has seen, if he has given half attention to his surroundings, the individual effort of the old-time school overwhelmed and submerged in the ever-increasing complication of the modern curriculum. Children have been poured, as wheat into the hopper, into its capacious maw, with the intention of bringing forth from its millstones a level and satisfactory product. Those who possessed the requisite qualities did come forth, in the end, men and women of worth. But what of waste ever attended the process! The final product bore no relation in numbers to the raw material furnished at the

*From Sup't E. A. Ladd, formerly principal of the Batavia high school

start. Hundreds, yes thousands were tossed out of its machinery upon the waste-heap, and every succeeding year has seen its machinery become more intricate, its waste more enormous.

Individual Instruction strives to save those who are thus rejected, aims to save the one and all. It hastens to put arms of love and sympathy about those who, by any means may be less fortunate than their fellows. It recognizes the fact, too often overlooked, that the progress of the mass must be measured not by its fore-runners but by those who mark the rear. It maintains that each and every child is endowed with an inherent and inalienable right to receive a share in the kingdom of knowledge. Upon these three great ideas individual instruction bases its thesis.

The application of individual instruction is simple. The day-after-day recitation is superseded by class-recitation alternating with individual recitation. This division of time forms

the sine qua non of its successful use, whether the grade be large or small, or conducted by one or two teachers. It is also essential that the consecutive recitations of the daily program should also alternate between the two forms of recitation. In the purely class-recitation form of instruction, where the pupils recite turn and turn about, success in work for all can be obtained only when all the pupils are equally endowed with mental capability, live in similar environments, and undergo like accidents in life. Such a situation is manifestly impossible. There must of necessity be found in any group of children some whose mental gifts are fewer, whose surroundings are less desirable, whose ancestry is more tainted with weakness, whose life influences are on a lower plane than those of others. When mass methods as exemplified in pure class instruction are applied to such heterogeneity, waste must inevitably ensue. Those well-equipped with favorable qualities will forge ahead; those, lacking these qualities,

some or all, will gravitate to the rear; while all the way between the two extremes will be found others whose capacities reach various degrees of perfection. The teacher, endowed as are most human beings with human frailties, is apt, after more or less of effort, to abandon many of those who are behind the line of average to their fate and devote her attention to such as she often styles the deserving, though in reality she is following the line of least resistance, a habit that has caused nine-tenths of the trouble in teaching. The neglected ones, after periods of school life of various lengths, withdraw from fruitless endeavor to learn, and enter the army of those who toil below the dead line of recompense. Their departure is witnessed often by the teacher with a sense of relief. It is so easy to blame their failure upon natural dullness, family need of the money they may earn, industrial demand for their services: upon anything in short save the real and true reason, the failure of the

teacher to teach. When the final reckoning is cast in such classes there is gratulation and joy on the teacher's part if even a tithe of the children can be reported as successful.

The teacher who uses the individual form of instruction feels keenly for those who are not present at this final roll-call. She is filled with a mighty yearning to count every one intrusted to her care among the jewels of her crown. When comes the day for individual work, she calls the child who is stumbling or who has been retarded by illness or other circumstance to her side. Seated there at the desk, in comparative seclusion, she clears away the trouble that unless removed may ruin the child's educational career for good and all. However, she tells nothing of this work, but by tactful and judicious questioning leads the pupil to master his work. A double gain results. The child is advanced in his work, while the rest of the class are busily engaged along the recitation forms in the preparation for advanced work. When,

next day, they are all called to class recitation, matters move smoothly. That waste of time that always occurs when the backward pupil, at the board or in recitation, flounders helplessly about, is avoided. The other members of the class, instead of sitting by as amused spectators, are all busy. They have no chance to sit in idleness until the exasperated teacher says curtly that the painful exhibition shall end and the work be taken up by another. In a class individually instructed there is no noise louder than the low question and answer of the two at the desk. All others may study, with nothing to divert attention. It follows from this way of conducting recitation, that the class loses no time because of omitted class periods but rather accomplishes more than can be accomplished by the pure class-hearing method.

The teacher using Individual Instruction will not find it necessary to call to her desk, day after day, the same pupils. When she has led her dull boy to the mastery of one problem,

she has given him strength that will enable him to grapple successfully with the next. Thus gaining mental power from time to time, the backward child soon becomes the average child and often the leading child. When this desirable condition has been wrought, another takes his place at the table. This constant application of attention and interest to those composing the rear division of the class results finally in bringing the whole body into one straight line, able triumphantly to advance to the attempting of other tasks, because all are conscious of the power to do.

Individual Instruction is a boon to the backward child. It aids the bright and intelligent as well. Errors in mental processes and mistakes in the writing of exercises are kept from their sight. In the usual class form of recitation, these errors and their correction consume a large part of the time, time that in individual instruction is available to all pupils not at the desk for quiet and uninterrupted work. To

see every pupil at work, and making use of every minute, is an inspiration. These busy pupils see little or no public exhibition of errors in individual instruction. Those, if they occur, are corrected quietly at the desk. Incorrect sentences in language work, or faulty methods in solution of problems surely work harm to all pupils who observe them, even though those pupils are fully able to think in the right way. Thus it can be clearly seen that a class in individual instruction is protected from the damaging influence of incorrect work to a large degree. It has also the advantage of the *esprit du corps* that is to be brought about only when every individual in a company knows that all others are swinging forward, bent upon the same goal, that satisfaction that arises when a regiment of soldiers arrives upon the field of battle with no stragglers lagging along the line of march. Every place is filled. All stand shoulder to shoulder, proud of their fellows' achievements, and sure in their support.

Individual instruction goes a long way toward solving the problem of discipline. The child who is not interested in school work, turns his activities in the direction of mischief. This lack of interest is unnatural, for the normal child is eager to work in school if he can at all times see the profitable results in that work. In the crowded school-room, it is very easy for him, either through inability to grasp principles as readily as his fellows, or through the failure of his teacher to recognize the instant of his wavering, to fall behind the average. One link in his development lost, his whole chain of progress is of no avail. He becomes hopelessly involved in a tangle of facts. As soon as he sees that he has lost his relative rank in his class, he naturally becomes discouraged and disorderly, thus giving rise to a vexing problem, for he cannot be removed from school until he reaches the age limit or passes the maximum test provided by law. Had his difficulty been overcome when first he encountered it, his

educational development would have received no check. He would have gone on from grade to grade and perhaps even finished high school. As long as he achieved success in his school tasks, he would have continued his effort, and maintained good deportment, for busy brains find little time for pranks. Individual Instruction thus accomplishes two great results: the children remain in school, thereby greatly lessening the percentage of withdrawal, while discipline is reduced to the minimum and in many cases its need is entirely eradicated.

No less important than any of the results so far mentioned, is the beneficial influence that Individual Instruction exerts upon the teacher herself. By this is meant not only the physical advantage to be derived from relief from constant efforts in the conducting of classes, but also the complete revolution that it works in her conception of the duties of the office she fills. It needs no demonstration to show that the teacher must receive bodily rest from the

individual period. She will also be able to conduct the next class period with less strain, for much of the vexatious delay and irritating complications connected usually with it has been avoided by having all of the pupils levelled up through the individual training of the slow and the dull. She will, again, be enabled better to understand each child that she invites to her desk, the directly personal and, as one might say, frankly confidential relations thus established. Individual Instruction thus reaches out and embraces child study, giving the teacher a powerful lever with which to execute her work. Yet all of this is of minor importance, when the retroactive influences that the Individual Instruction exerts upon the teacher are considered. When the teacher comes to see that every backward child can be redeemed and set upon the high road of education, she will be filled with the magnitude of her calling. Instead of rejoicing when the dull child leaves school, she will be satisfied only when that leak

has been stopped by bringing every pupil to the successful end of work. She will not regard children as natural foes, to be endured for a season and then dismissed with thankfulness. She will rather see in all of them opportunities for the exercise of love and sympathy. Her vocation will become to her a joy, measured not by the stipend she receives, but by the possibilities it offers for the uplift of individuals, and, through them, the uplift of the human race. Individual Instruction carried to its logical conclusion means a new race of teachers, men and women whose hearts will be filled with a mighty love for children, who will not be content until every straying, lagging child is safely brought into the fold of education. The whole system as conceived by its able and far-seeing originator, is based upon that sublime utterance of the Greatest of all Teachers, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not."

Chapter XXII

*Elimination of the Ninth Grade**

Last spring Superintendent Belknap of the Lockport schools visited Batavia to investigate individual instruction. Soon afterwards M. A. Federspeil, a member of the Board of Education of Lockport, also made an investigation here. Both were so favorably impressed with the Batavia system that Superintendent Belknap returned and brought with him the principal of the Lockport high school and several teachers who spent the day visiting our schools. As a result the Batavia system has been adopted by Lockport and an article in regard to the matter appeared in the Lockport *Union-Sun* which in part was as follows:

* * * * *

The Board of Education last night adopted

*From the Batavia *Sunday Times*
(151)

a report of the committee on teachers, text books and schools, recommending the installation of the Batavia plan of instruction in the local public schools at the beginning of the school year in September. This method provides for definite and specific class and individual teaching, one-half of the school session being devoted to each.

This system was highly recommended by Trustee M. A. Federspeil, chairman of the committee, who presented the report urging its adoption, and also by Sup't of Schools Emmet Belknap, both of whom visited the schools of Batavia on several occasions and witnessed a practical demonstration of the teaching in vogue in that city. Sup't Belknap on one of his visits was accompanied by a number of the local teachers, who were much interested in the work performed there.

Trustee Federspeil claimed that changing from the method now in use here to that practiced at Batavia involved considerable alteration in instruction. He believed that by it

however, students would accomplish more than under the present plan, the Batavia plan seemed to draw more out of each than is possible under the system here.

He thought that the new plan would meet with the disapproval of the older teachers here, but the younger teachers, he imagined, would adapt themselves to it more readily. Its simpleness in reaching the dull and backward student commended it most highly, as it enabled the pupils to get through their school work much earlier than is possible in this city.

President Earl, Trustees Griggs, Whitmore and others believed the introduction of the new system in the local schools would be a step in the right direction. The committee's report was then unanimously adopted.

Sup't Belknap next presented a report regarding the elimination of the ninth year in the grade schools and also recommending the Batavia plan, which was adopted. His report was as follows:

In making plans for the elimination of the ninth year of elementary school course, as directed by you, I have previously suggested and you have authorized the semi-annual classification and promotion of pupils. Since that time, I have had occasion to reflect upon the fact that such classification and advancement will be more difficult here than in cities in which the school buildings are larger so as to contain all elementary grades and permit frequent reclassification in the same school and building than in our case, where we have no building instructing all elementary grades, so that pupils have to change schools twice or three times before reaching the Union school building.

I have had all through this year—as in previous years—very frequent occasion to reflect upon the difficulty of so grading pupils in classes not too difficult for teachers, to observe the necessity of much individual teaching, and to provide for it by all sorts of temporary expedients and by employing extra assistants where

classes were large or teachers not in health, in order to prevent pupils falling behind their respective grades and classes. Unless this is done, pupils who have reached the age of legal employment are much less inclined to remain at school, and to leave as early as they can do so. An increased number of such leave school each year. I have issued 105 school records for pupils leaving school under sixteen years of age since the schools opened last September, and others have withdrawn who did not take out employment papers.

I have come to feel that of more importance than semi-annual classification and advancement, is that the necessity of definite and systematic individual teaching by the regular teachers should be recognized and definitely provided for. I have made a careful study by observation and comparison of the results obtained under such provision in the schools of Batavia, where such plan and provision have been consistently pursued during a period of

14 years past, and have come to the conclusion that it is my duty to call attention to it, and to recommend that a similar system be authorized and provided in our schools. By the simple provision there that all teachers devote one-half of the time of instruction to classes and the other half to individual teaching, giving the individual teaching to all children, so that those more capable may be advanced more rapidly and those less capable move forward as rapidly as their ability under personal attention will permit, they are accomplishing all that we seek to accomplish by the elimination of the ninth year, are holding their pupils longer in school, and their grammar and high school registration is largely increased and increasing, while ours is lessening. I find that it is done without strain and worry of either pupils or teachers, that their teachers are less frequently absent because of illness due to overwork, that more of the work is accomplished in the regular school hours, and that less work and study has to be

done by either teachers or pupils at home.

Individual instruction is continually necessary. It is unavoidable if pupils are to be enabled to learn and to progress in their classes as they should do, and we have been doing it in an unscientific, spasmodic and uneconomical way by taking valuable time in class recitation periods to try to have pupils recite and perform what they do not know sufficiently and by frequent and sometimes long detentions after school. The worst of it is that in many cases it is thus done ineffectually, and that in other cases where it was most needed and due the pupil, it has not been done at all.

By the Batavia plan pupils gain from 1-4 to 1-3 of time for study in school; the teacher knows much better the real mental condition of every child under her instruction, more is accomplished in fewer recitations, detentions after school to make up work are brief and less frequent, less study has to be done out of school hours, teachers do not have to spend so many hours

looking over and marking test and lesson exercises at home in the evening, and the spirit and health of pupils and teachers are conserved. I could not help noticing the cordial and spontaneous fine spirit of teachers and pupils in their school work there.

In three separate visits in many school rooms of all the grades I always found pupils busily and happily at work, no inclination to be indolent, mischievous or to waste time or to be in any way disorderly. I do not recall seeing or hearing any teacher have to chide or correct a child for disorder or disobedience. The atmosphere and the spirit of all rooms breathed freedom, happiness, pride in their work, and the expectation and consciousness of success was uniformly manifest. This because all were doing what they needed to do and were capable of doing, because the teacher was intelligently conscious of the condition of each child, and by personal attention making his or her ultimate success a reasonable certainty.

Discipline is good and natural there, and I understand that punishment by the rod or by harsh measure has been avoided there for years.

The individual plan in connection with class instruction does not increase the cost of instruction, and it is not accomplished by greater work or strain on the part of teachers. In rooms of ordinary size classes one teacher does all of the work of instruction, except that done by special teachers of drawing, music, etc.; but if the class is excessive in size, 50 or more, two teachers are placed in the room—one to do individual, the other class work, though they are privileged to interchange and combine their work as desired under approval of the superintendent.

Their classification and promotion of classes are yearly, but by their system individual promotions or demotions, which are sometimes advisable, are easily and freely made at any time, pupils gaining grades by making the work, not by skipping it. I would adopt the essential features of the system and believe that on

proper trial it would greatly commend itself to all concerned, parents, pupils and teachers, and that the scholarship of our schools would not be lessened but much strengthened in general.

In all my examination of pupils who have been reported to me as deficient and not succeeding with their work and unable to accomplish the work of the grade in which they had been placed, I found that, unless it was a case of intellectual deficiency or physical disability, individual teaching was the one and only remedy, and that if it had been intelligently applied and persevered in the condition would not have arisen. It is due to every child, and I do not think any school system has a right to disregard it or to fail to provide definitely for it. Teachers who have for a long time been accustomed to the old way of teaching may, at the beginning, be apprehensive that it means increased labor and strain for them, but I am confident that when they see how it improves the work of their

pupils and increases their aspiration for work and progress, and that it removes much of the strain and emancipates them from much that has to be drudgery under the former plan of teaching, they will be grateful and thankful for it and co-operate cheerfully and intelligently. It means good, discriminating teaching that accomplishes results, because rightly applied, and does not have to be done over and over again in order to accomplish a minimum of result.

Chapter XXIII

*Strengthening the Graded System**

In response to your request for a special report on the present status of the Batavia plan in Batavia and the observed results of its use, I beg leave to submit the following:

The plan is in full operation here, and is well started on its fourteenth year of use. It may therefore be said to have stood the test of time.

Its popularity at the outstart was instantaneous. The people understood it at once, and applauded it. At present I see no abatement of its popularity.

I think that I have observed many and varied results springing from the use of this plan. Some of those results have been surprising and all have been gratifying. I cannot hope to go into them all, but will mention some.

*A report made by request of the School of Pedagogy of Chicago University

When a crowd are assembled it is either uplift or crush for the individual. We think that our plan has secured the inspiration and warded off the danger.

Where there is inequality of condition the crowd becomes a tangled mass. The attempt to move a tangled mass is overstrain. Under our plan we think there is no strain. Our teachers we think are becoming more vigorous from year to year.

Worry of any kind has its goal in break-down, if not in death. And few people are aware how contagious a thing nervous debility is. Nerves are responsive to nerves. We think that worry has been eliminated here, and that our children are calm, composed, safe, and vigorous.

Sanitation should be the first care of school management. Under our plan I think that our schools have become not only sanitary but salubrious. That is I think that schools properly individualled become conducive to the recovery of impaired or lost health.

Interested occupation is preoccupation, and all know that preoccupation in good things is the best safe-guard against the approach of evil things. I think that our plan tends toward absorbed preoccupation in the good work of getting an education. This is not only a negative safe-guard, but it is also a positive promotive of character by supplying high aims.

I have implied already that our order and discipline have greatly improved. They have greatly improved; and it is the right kind of order; it is the order that not only permits business to proceed; it is the order that is an atmosphere that nourishes the growth of character. Where energy is expended in securing a semblance of order, the same energy must be employed in maintaining it. There is tension that is depleting and depressing all around.

Our individual teaching has enabled us to move our grades. They do not now sink down by their own weight. Our children all move forward and arrive on time. The quick one no

longer marks time; he sets the pace for the rest of them; and the rest line up on him. There is no longer any retardation. There is no longer any necessity for skipping grades in order to get on. We always allow an individual to gain a grade where it is to his advantage to do so. The gainer of a grade needs individual attention; and under our plan he gets it. Let no one suppose that the individualling is done only with children of questionable capacity. There are numerous circumstances that send our brightest pupils at times to the individual table.

It is here that we get the benefit of schooling. The child's first incentive is to line up with his fellows. He works first for his line; then he works because of enjoyment in his work, and at last he works for grand remote aims. When his acquisitive powers are trained, and when he can see the goal of life, he may then work out his own salvation in the solitude of home.

The school classes and grades should move forward in lines dressed at right-angles to the line of advancement.

No child has been promoted here as a favor; no child has been promoted here to get him out of the way, Every child here has been promoted because he has shown under severe test that he was ready for promotion. Under separate cover I send you transcripts of the promotion examinations records. These records are kept on file at the office of the Board of Education for the inspection of all. Any investigator will find there the school record of every child for a series of years.

You will observe that every child has passed the minimum; that nearly all of them have a comfortable margin beyond the minimum; and that most of them are hovering around the maximum. We could not get any such results until we resorted to individualling. We would not have thought such results credible.

It may perhaps strengthen confidence in the integrity and searchingness of the examination to say that the questions for all above the fourth grade come from Albany, and that the examina-

tions are conducted under regulations fixed by the state department. I have many reasons for favoring a strong state department; and not the least is that they make statistics of some value.

One conspicuous result of our individual teaching is that it has enabled us to keep our grades intact. There is not an ungraded school nor an ungraded room in this town, nor is there a grade section. Grade section seems to me the first step towards grade dissection; in other words the first step toward the ungraded school. Perhaps the ungraded school is needed but I do not think so. I do not think that we need to go back sixty years. The people of sixty years ago were not contented; they struggled for progress, and to some purpose; they gave us the graded school. And I think that they gave a great contribution.

Since we have been attending to the individual we have seen no necessity for disturbing our annual intervals and annual promotions.

I think that there is an advantage in having the elementary grades conform to the practice that is universal in the secondary schools, colleges, and universities. The grading of the elementary schools was but an extension downward of the organization that proved so satisfactory in higher education. We think that it obviates much confusion, and that it is better in every way, to have a third year child, for example, mean one thing, and not two things. There is something gained, I think, by symmetry and clearness. Furthermore where the purpose is integration rather than disintegration I think that a semi-annual promotion is premature. We need the full year, and the children need the full year, in order to reach the best results.

A very noticeable result of our plan has been the remarkable expansion of our upper grades and high school. In a total enrollment of 1750 there are over 850 in the upper seven of the twelve grades. In a total enrollment of 1750 there are 375 in the high school and 125 in the

8th grade. Those 8th grade pupils are practically high school students as they are all studying algebra and other high school branches; so you may say without much exaggeration that in a total enrollment of 1750 we have 500 in the high school.

And what those students are doing in the high school I look upon as a result of our plan. We require geometry and one or two other things. But in the main our high school course is elective. I think that what our students have elected is quite significant of the workings of our plan. We believe most heartily in industrial education and have made ample provision for it. I think, however, that industrialism should be taught in the atmosphere of culture. A proper education implies immediate aims and remote aims. They should never in my opinion be divorced.

I do not say that those who choose remote aims always choose wisely; but I do say that the mere fact that they have chosen remote

aims is a high compliment to them and to their teacher. The election in our high school has compelled us to provide extensively for cultural as well as practical work. And this is as it should be. The one makes the other virile and available; the other humanizes, refines, and ennobles the one.

It is only a corollary of the foregoing to say that our students are going to college in larger numbers and seeking the benefits of higher education. We have about fifty students in the colleges at present. And I mean the colleges of liberal culture as distinguished from the technical and professional schools. We have other numbers in those schools; and they make quite a colony, or even a community on their home-comings.

The school register is I think a good index of the efficiency and success of the school. A school must take hold in order to tend toward a maximum of registration and a maximum of average daily attendance. I think that our

registers have shown a gratifying response to our plan. Whatever expands the aggregate registration and average attendance tends to reduce the per capita cost of education. We have been reducing the per capita since the introduction of the Batavia plan. But we have also been reducing the aggregate and actual cost by reducing the number of buildings, the number of janitors, the number of separate equipments, and other items. The reduction of expense has never been a motive with us, but it will be of interest to those who would like to compare the cost of different plans.

Our plan tends to the reduction of expense in another way. It has taught us the desirability of larger classes. A large class under proper conditions is a powerful educational factor. There is a point of course at which a class will break down by its own weight. But the ordinary school cannot reach that point. The trouble with an ordinary school is that it has to have many classes that are too small.

I think it a great mistake to make small classes deliberately.

An efficient school has a tendency to approach the condition of a balanced school as to the sexes. Ineffective school work tends to make boys cheap. I like to see something like a boy famine. The cheap boy sags down in school and he eventually sags out. It would be well for him if no one worse than the green-grocer got hold of him. When the hoodlum swarms in the street and infests public places it shows that boys are very cheap. The good school is the Noah's ark for the immature boy.

The Batavia plan is not a labor-saving device; it is rather a labor-making device. Our teachers and pupils are very busy; they have much to do to meet on time all the demands made upon them. But such is the law of the matter. There is no royal road to a generous and sustaining education. Work and sustained diligence are the price of education. Indeed work and diligence are education in its best aspect.

Let no one have any fears of work and diligence. If force, and strain, and unkindness, and bitterness, and cross-purposes are eliminated you cannot impose too much work and diligence; the well will get sick on worry; the sick will get well on work and diligence.

You will naturally ask what our experience has been with reference to atypical, defective and subnormal children. I do not see any reason why we should not have our share of all kinds of unfortunates. I believe that we do have our full share of them. I cite you again to the promotion reports. If those were selected children the data would be worth nothing. Those are all our children. It must be acknowledged that many children are handicapped at the outstart in many ways by mental and physical troubles. For such children there is no chance at all in the school that teaches only en masse; they are foredoomed. As to what can be done with them in the school that singles out the individual to deal with him according

to his need, I must cite you again to the reports. I have to say that you will find among the records that are by no means the lowest some who were very seriously handicapped.

Any intelligent attempt at cure implies diagnosis. The mere calling of a lagging and backward child leads at once to a diagnosis of his case. It is often found that the mere calling was all that he needed. He was too far away; he did not see well, or he did not hear well. By the side of the teacher he both hears and sees and he looms at once in his power. He is thereafter seated with reference to his infirmity, and his case is solved. With some it is a wandering and unmanageable attention that needs to be controlled and trained. With others it is a distressing nervous timidity which has been their undoing. Some have that woful passivity and inertness so likely to mislead the inexperienced teacher; so likely to cause her to pronounce that fatal phrase "born short", and to go on with the go-on-ers. But we have seen the giant roused

too often to permit ourselves to yield to discouragement. We have "learned to labor and to wait". And by the way, we never have to wake a giant twice; when he once has realized his brawniness he never thereafter forgets it; he is never again a pygmy in his own estimation. Some are late arrivals in the room and need much adjustment. Others have been absent by reason of illness and have gotten out of touch with the work. Some are trying to make an extra grade. But whatever the cause may be the teacher has become expert in detecting it, and has adapted the cure to the case. Cure in the grade is our plan. We think that segregation should never be thought of.

But would I not segregate the feeble-minded and incorrigibles? Yes, I would consent to the segregation of the feeble-minded. But they segregate themselves; the number of hopeless defectives that present themselves for registration in a public school does not amount to more than a fraction of one per cent. That is not

enough to constitute a problem in a town of only twelve thousand inhabitants. When one of those unfortunates presents himself we register him and give him our best possible attention. And it does him good to mingle with normal children. He even learns something. No one will question the wisdom of segregating the totally blind and the totally deaf. But we have advanced stages of defective sight and hearing that are doing very well.

I am not quite ready to concede the segregation of the incorrigible. I am not quite sure that a school system needs something like a lock-up. I am quite sure that it would be very wicked to "run in" to that institution children who have never offended, children who have only suffered. And I need some further evidence to convince me that a strong grade is not the best place for an incorrigible.

The immediate goal of the individual teacher is to put the pupil into a condition to react against the sweep of the class, and to enable him

to appropriate the benefits of class-membership and class-instruction. Knowledge is not the aim at the individual table; it is power, initiative, vigor. It is not a taking of him off his feet. It is a putting of him on his feet. He cannot get his lessons at the individual table; he can only get his power there; so there is no coaching. This means of course that the pupil cannot offer himself as a subject for individual attention. Every pupil knows that he must recite on his own preparation. If he does not recite well his case receives such attention as it merits. A plan that aims at vigor puts no premium on laziness or cowardice.

➤ Our individual teacher does nothing but ask questions. It is no refuge for an evader to run up against a questioner. No one is rendered weak/ or dependent by being asked a question. The question meets the needy one at a crisis in his life, and proves his salvation.

Justice is defined as the giving unto each human being his right. The rights of an indi-

vidual are exactly co-extensive with his needs. Needs, rights, and duties are correlative terms, covering the same exact subject or object matter. Duty is what is *due* from us, and what we *ought* to do is what we *owe* to do. If anyone suffers any restriction of his right someone is delinquent in the discharge of his duty. Some one is either *insolvent*, or he is disregarding of his obligations. Children have many debtors because they have many needs; but there are few on whom they have as great and as sacred claims as on their teacher.

My own convictions after fourteen years of experience with this plan are a result that may possibly be of interest. I offer them for what they are worth. I like our children as they are. I believe that they are susceptible of a fine education if we subject them to the dual process of individual attention and class stimulus. I believe that either of these processes will break down without the sustaining aid of the other. But in due combination I think they are invin-

cible. But the combination like other wholesome compounds must have its quantitative formula. The combination of individual and class instruction that gives a potency is the proportion of one to one. It is a formula easily remembered; it is H. O. without any subscribed exponents or indices whatever.

Chapter XXIV.

*With Children of Foreign Parentage**

At the opening of the September term in the Cleveland school, Ishpeming, Mich., we had 112 first-grade children in one room, and there was no other room of any kind to be secured.

The pupils are children of miners; all but three are of foreign parentage, and their uppermost thought and ambition is to learn to talk, read, and write the English language, and the father and mother are anxious to adopt the American language and customs. They are mostly Finns. Their first aim is to send their children to school.

These first-grade children really teach their fathers, mothers, and adult uncles, cousins, aunts, and boarders the English they learn in school.

*From *New England Journal of Education*. By Winifred Lacy, M.P.D., Principal and Primary Teacher, Cleveland School, Ishpeming, Mich.

I was facing a proposition more easily imagined than described. Superintendent E. E. Scribner settled it offhand by saying: "Use the Batavia system." The readers of the *Journal of Education* have long been familiar with the general plan of Superintendent John Kennedy of Batavia, N. Y., which he introduced to that city in 1898.

I took charge of the room myself and took as my assistant a high school graduate with no experience. At first there was scarcely a child who could understand, much less speak, English. For three weeks we worked on faith and motions chiefly. Think of two of us starting in with 112 such children.

We alternated recitation and individual work. While my assistant heard a reading lesson, for instance, I took the slower children in the other part of the class and helped them on the difficult words and phrases of the lesson they would soon recite to her.

I assisted the laggards so that they were the

bright ones when they came to their reading lesson. They knew that they knew the words and phrases and were eager to show how well they could read. They had a relish for the lesson. They were no longer timid.

The children not helped much were quick enough to read by themselves. Lesson after lesson would pass without a child's halting or stumbling over a word or phrase. They could read two or three times as much in a given period as is customary. Every child was in the game confidently.

His help had come quietly, individually, and in advance rather than publicly and humiliatingly after failure.

The results were equally surprising in writing, in spelling, in language, in music, and in drawing.

At the end of four months these 112 children were much in advance of a similar room with forty-five children taught in the regular way by an extra good teacher.

The class will be promoted as a whole, not more than three or four being retained of the 112 who entered last September. In a class of forty-five by the ordinary teaching about ten or twelve will be retarded, or a rate of twenty-five to thirty out of 112.

But the gain is not wholly for the child. It is a great blessing to the teachers. Who can estimate the strain upon a teacher who from day to day has from a fourth to a third of her class hanging back on her nerves all the time?

Nothing could be more depressing than this. It clouds the atmosphere of the school, it wears upon the bright children, it deadens more and more the slow ones, it saps the teacher's energy, racks her nerves, and often wrecks her life.

On the other hand, there is nothing more inspiring than the conquest of ignorance by a child. There is tonic like an ocean breeze in seeing child after child gain individual power in reading, writing, spelling, use of English, music and drawing.

Who can describe the joy of a teacher who has seen her naturally slow pupils become bright, eager, with a conquering-hero spirit? It is also economical, because the work of a quarter of the class does not have to be done over again.

All honor to John Kennedy of Batavia for what he has done for the Cleveland school of Ishpeming, and this school is but one of a thousand in England and America.

The pity of it all is that tens of thousands of schools waste the time of children, waste public money, and ruin teachers' lives, and often because of traditional prejudice.

Chapter XXV

*Advantage over After-school Assistance**

Pursuant to the vote of your committee it was my privilege to make during the month an investigation of the working of the Batavia plan, so-called, of individual instruction. I submit for your consideration the following report.

Everything seemed to favor the purpose of our visit.

We had ample opportunity to see the working of the plan in the rooms with two teachers, in those with one teacher only and in the classes of the high school. There is no difference in the value or practicability under either of these conditions. The whole problem in each case is a matter of arranging the school programme to allow time for both class and individual in-

Report of Sup't Stanley H. Holmes, Haverhill, Mass.

struction. The plan is so simple, so sensible and so satisfactory in its operation that it seems a marvel that it has not been worked out long before its development in Batavia. As you step into one of the large rooms in the Batavia schools you observe that it is occupied by from 60 to 70 pupils, arranged so as to face the inner side of the room. There are two teachers in the room—one a class teacher the other an individual teacher. Each is busy and undisturbed by the work of the other. The class teacher is at one side in the front of the room conducting a class exercise with division one. It may be an exercise devoted to the development of some new or advanced topic of the subject as the metric system. The entire division is alert and attentive, and, so far as this work is concerned, the exercise differs in no respect from a similar exercise in our own schools. It may be, however, that the teacher is devoting the period of the class exercise to a recitation by the pupils upon some topic or phase of the subject which

has already been developed or taught in some previous class period. If this be the case, we find that the teacher is keeping in mind the purpose of the exercise as a testing exercise to find out what the pupils know of the topic and discover those who do not know. She keeps this purpose of testing clearly in mind and does not confuse it with the purpose of the other type of class exercise mentioned above, which is devoted to the development of a new topic, and in this testing exercise the teacher does little more than to ask questions, as the recitation progresses. We note that she has close at hand a pencil and paper. If a pupil rises at her call to recite and is unable to give a satisfactory recitation, or says he does not know, the teacher makes note of his failure on the paper which she has at hand and without waiting longer and without making any attempt then and there to develop the subject for the benefit of this single pupil who has failed, without keeping the class waiting to listen to the ineffectual

attempts of a child who knows little or nothing of the topic in hand, the teacher tells the pupil to sit and passes on with the work, calling up another pupil. And so the work progresses during the entire class period, without break or interruption. At the close these things have been accomplished: Those pupils who understand the topic have had an opportunity to recite upon it and thus by oral statement to fix it more firmly in mind, and at the same time gain practice in oral expression. Those pupils who have failed have been noted and the teacher is prepared to report to her colleague the names of those who are weak in the subject or topic and who need special help upon it. During all this time the pupils of division two are profitably occupied with quiet study upon the subject which the school programme calls for, while the second or individual teacher sits in the front of the room facing this division at a table at which two chairs have been placed, one of which she occupies and the other of which is occupied

by a pupil whom she has called out for individual instruction. There is no noise in this end of the room. This individual instruction is all given so quietly that except for the ocular evidence one would not suspect that such a thing is going on in the room. If we take pains to get close enough to see and hear just what this individual teacher is doing we find that in a low, pleasant, sympathetic tone of voice she is leading the pupil to help himself and to master his difficulty for himself. There is no loudness or harshness of tone, there is no impression left upon the pupil but that which sympathetic helpfulness from the teacher and his own mastery of difficulty will leave, and he goes to his seat after 5, 10, or 15 minutes of this sort of help with a new courage and hope, a feeling of increased mastery and power, and the conviction that if he will help himself he will in time master all the obstacles that hinder his progress and will pass on with his classmates at the close of the year's work. At the close of the period the

two teachers exchange divisions, the class teacher to do class work with division two, and the individual teacher to do individual work with division one. The work of conducting the work in the room with but a single teacher does not differ materially from that in the two-teacher room. The programme must be so arranged as to make one half of the periods in a subject as arithmetic, for example, class periods and one half individual instruction periods. While the individual work is going on the class is occupied in profitable study. There are a few of our schoolrooms in which it would be feasible to so arrange the work that two teachers might be employed in them without adding to our present teaching force. In nearly all of our rooms, however, one teacher only, as at present, should be employed. $\angle$

In the high school where the departmental plan of work is in operation, as it is in our high school, the periods for work in any subject with a class alternate, one being devoted to class in-

struction or class recitation and the next day's period to individual work in the same subject, while the class as a whole is profitably employed upon written drill work or study that has to do with the subject at hand. The high school programme is not arranged at all differently on account of this individual instruction. The question naturally arises, What do the Batavia teachers think of this plan of doing school work? In no case did inquiry elicit anything but a favorable opinion of its value and practicability. They believe in it and they will tell you in every room that they plan and expect that at the end of the year they will send forward their grades in unbroken ranks, and that the only pupils who will not secure promotion will be in those possible cases where children may have entered the schools so late in the summer term that not enough individual instruction can be given to bring them up to the grade. From what I was able to discover from a careful examination of the working and results, and from what I have

learned of its working in places where it has been tried, I would report that the impression made upon my own mind was distinctly favorable. It is always the pupil who, because of natural slowness, or absence, or some other cause, has failed to comprehend and so has fallen behind his class who is carried constantly in the mind of the conscientious, thoughtful teacher, and it is this pupil whom such a teacher is always anxious and ready to work for and work with to bring about improvement and advancement. The trouble has been not in a lack of willingness to work or a lack of anxiety for better things on the part of the teacher. It has lain in the notion that the time and place to reach the individual is the regular class recitation period or in hours other than regular school hours, i. e., by keeping after school. Because of this notion teachers have striven constantly to bring the methods of the recitation as near as possible to perfection, thinking that excellent teaching and recitation methods ought

to reach a much greater proportion of the class, if not all. They have also been ready to devote much time out of school hours to such pupils as could be induced to come for individual help and instruction. To be sure, from improved methods of presentation and recitation we can always see tangible and encouraging results, but with the best of teaching skill applied only in recitation there is always left a section of the class which is not reached, and which as a result fails in promotion at the end of the year. Individual instruction given out of school hours is also fruitful of results, but is open to the serious objection that the regular school hours are long enough and taxing enough for both teacher and pupil who is compelled to remain after school for help is in no mood to receive from the instruction the fullest benefit. He feels that it is an injustice to him to compel him to stay for longer than the regular hours, so the number who are really much benefited from such after-school help is necessarily limited, almost entirely,

to those few who voluntarily ask for such help, the fact being that such pupils as do ask for this after-school assistance are pretty sure to be the most satisfactory and interested pupils in the class, who need help the least of any.

In other words teachers have over magnified the value of the class recitation and instruction exercise in reaching the individual pupil. The purpose of this class exercise period may be to instruct, i. e., to teach. It may be to test and if to test it is also to train in oral expression. It is erroneous and wasteful to devote any large portion of the class period to an effort to reach the pupil who fails or is behind his classmates. To take such a time for individual teaching is embarrassing to the slow pupil and decidedly uninteresting and wasteful for the rest of the class who must wait.

I have already shown why individual instruction after school hours is likely to be unprofitable.

In the working of the Batavia plan there is no

loss of class time. The weak pupil is definitely known and noted together with his particular weakness. There is very little, if any, cause for embarrassment for the weak pupil, as he is not made to stand and flounder about while the teacher attempts to give him individual instruction in the presence of the idle, waiting class. Then again, under this plan, no weak pupil is neglected or is able to escape the help of the teacher, for he is known, his weakness is known, and he is given quiet, sympathetic, individual help during the regular school hours, not being expected or even encouraged to remain after the regular school hours.

Home study for pupils of elementary grades is practically eliminated by this plan. When the school room door closes at noon or night the children of these grades leave their school work behind them as they should. This is due to the fact that the time for quiet, intensive study in the school room is much increased. This alone is a very desirable feature of the plan.

Under prevailing methods of management in most schools there is too much of bustle and recitation work and too little quiet studious application to tasks. This has arisen, of course, from the anxiety on the teacher's part to reach the individual (as well as the class) and the idea that has possessed her mind that the only route to any goal lay through the teaching and recitation exercise.

I cannot close without saying a word with respect to one of the most noticeable and satisfactory results of the plan, its moral effect on teacher and pupils. It would perhaps be better to say little rather than much on this particular thing and so leave those who make a trial of the plan to find this out for themselves. Its effect is sure to be beneficial in lessening the teacher's feeling of strain and anxiety because of the unsatisfactory ones in her class, for with this plan she may have the hope of helping those who so much need help and instruction. It puts the teacher, too, into an attitude of sym-
pa-

thy and appreciation for the weak or slow pupil. She better understands him and his need after he has sat beside her for a few minutes from day to day, while she has tried to develop in him greater power and to help him to more rapid progress. It also places the pupil who needs help in an equally sympathetic and appreciative attitude toward his teacher. He feels now that his teacher is his friend and not his task-master. As one teacher expressed herself to me: "This individual work makes me feel altogether different toward the slow boy when he gets up to recite, for I understand him better and he understands me better."

It relieves pupils, too, from their all too common anxiety about the possibility of promotion and non-promotion at the end of the school year, for the strong pupil does more and better work and the weak pupil has the hope of having the obstacles to progress removed and of emerging from his present condition of weakness. It puts courage into both teacher and pupil.

I might mention also the better attitude which it causes the parent to assume toward the school when he realizes that the teacher is actually making an effort to do for his child who may be behind in any subject the very thing which the parent would himself do for his child in giving him individual help provided the parent had the requisite knowledge of school requirements, the necessary teaching skill and the time to devote to the matter.

I have not mentioned its effect upon the discipline of the school. The good order, the quiet atmosphere, the eagerness and cheerfulness in attacking and performing new tasks were all marked features of the Batavia schools, resultant undoubtedly from this system of individual instruction. But I leave the mention of those things to my colleagues of the special committee.

I have but one recommendation to make—that the plan be given a fair trial in our schools. I have faith to believe that in the hands of a force of teachers of such ability and teaching

skill as our own the plan will prove itself a success and will win loyal and enthusiastic support. There is need of it in every grade from the first through the high school, and with the sanction of the school board and a fair trial in the schools there is every reason to look for excellent results.

Chapter XXVI

*Development of the Spirit of Work**

The Batavia system of individual instruction had its origin in a very common occurrence—that of an over-crowded school. To relieve the situation the superintendent secured the service of an experienced teacher who had retired from school on account of ill health.

It was arranged that all pupils who were slow, backward or for any reason not up to the work of the grade, should be sent to her for special help.

As days and weeks went by she became particularly interested in each child, his progress, work and steadily increasing power to do for himself.

The standard of the whole class was raised and as the plan became a success in that room,

*Miss Reed's Report to the School Board of Haverhill, Mass.

the superintendent authorized its use in others where the numbers were sufficiently large to require the services of two teachers.

The next step was to adapt the method to classes with one teacher, and the following plan was devised.

After a regular class recitation another lesson is assigned in the usual manner for the next day, possibly longer than under the old plan. All who are equal to the work study by themselves during the period while the teacher is left free to give instruction to any who need it.

She will have noted already in the previous class exercise who these are. They come to her desk or table, and, while I sat by giving my close attention, I did not hear a pupil told a single word or point until it was actually necessary—instead, he was led by skilful questioning through the difficulty to find his own errors, thus gaining power and courage for the next task.

In a few words I will name what, in my judg-

ment, are some of the advantages of this system.

First. It is individual as the name indicates. The teacher knows precisely each pupil's difficulty. It may be a small one in her opinion but to him it is a huge obstacle—there is no progress until it is removed. In class work the ordinary child is very liable to feel he is only one of many, and the responsibility of following the recitation is cast upon others—the few who are always ready. He may not actually go through this process of reasoning but as far as his knowledge goes, it amounts to the same thing. When he sits by his teacher and her attention is given to him alone, this cannot be—there can be no reason for shirking here.

Second. A definite and regular period is arranged for this assistance. It is constant and therefore steadily progressive.

Third. As the power of a child grows he gains confidence, courage and a willingness to work. I never saw more industrious classes than in Batavia. Very little of the spirit of

indifference was noticeable, but in its place a readiness to persevere until the work was accomplished.

I desire to consider two of the objections that have been brought to my notice.

It is said these pupils will become dependent and form the habit of relying upon others.

I do not think so. My own experience is that the majority of children are interested in doing whatever they can do well.

Their progress may be slow and laborious, but guided by a strong, sympathetic teacher, one who recognizes individual differences and shows pupils how to study, how to find their own errors and correct them, they will learn gradually the still greater and more important lesson of using and depending upon their own abilities.

In one sense, children are not by nature altogether dependent, and it is the wise parent or teacher who does not allow circumstances or environment to weaken the faculty of independence.

It has also further been said that the so-called bright pupils are neglected and suffer from this system. I do not feel that this is necessary. In a quiet hour of study, they are surely made to depend more upon themselves, which is the wisest thing that can be done for them.

Plenty of work is always provided, and an opportunity is given to each one to move on according to his individual ability. If, for any reason, they need special attention, the fact will soon become apparent.

In my own experience, I have found that brilliant scholars are very few, and I, for one, am not sorry, for I believe in work, work, and the vigor and strength of character which it alone brings.

I realize that true progress in most cases is achieved by patient, plodding labor—not by leaps and bounds. The slow pupils must be encouraged. We need them in school and in the larger world. They usually become reliable citizens and often are learners in successful, hon-

orable business enterprises. For these reasons and others I believe absolutely in the underlying principle of the Batavia system.

Just one word for the teachers of Haverhill. Many of us have already been trying to work along this line. We have considered the matter again and again and have ever been the friend of the slow, possibly the dull pupil. We have done everything in our power to hold him in the school, endeavoring not to allow petty troubles and boyish pranks to mar our view of the future man or woman who sits day after day before us, for the thoughtful teacher ever keeps her face toward the future.

It seems to me two things at least may be done.

We may have a systematic plan and a regular time for individual instruction, without which very little is accomplished in any line.

We already have the interest and co-operation of our superintendent.

Now we desire the authority and support of the school board.

Shall we have it?

Respectfully submitted,

MARY A. REID,

Principal of Crowell School.

Chapter XXVII

*Personal Aid under Favorable Conditions**

The "Batavia plan" has been widely advertised, and its praise sounded in such glowing terms that it has, perhaps, suffered from the friends it has made. We are always suspicious of a "cure all" educationally or otherwise. When, therefore, it became my duty to make a personal examination, I was not free from a feeling of distrust. I was willing to see, and expecting to see good; but also on the lookout for its weaknesses. Visiting 25 or more school rooms, many of them more than once, I saw fairly well the working of the system, and came away a stronger believer in it than when I went.

As you already know, the plan of teaching calls for an equal division of the teacher's time between class work and individual teaching.

*Report of Principal Gray of the Winter street school, Haverhill, Mass.

There is probably no teacher in Haverhill who has not given individual instruction, but in Batavia a method has been developed by which unusually happy results are attained. Perhaps most teachers have sometimes given help to pupils in much the same manner in which it is done there, but it has been the unusual, infrequent thing. Often our teachers have done this work after the regular session, a time when neither pupil nor teacher is in the best condition for work. Often the pupil who has not recited satisfactorily is kept standing while the teacher fires volleys of explanation, questions and perhaps, criticism, excellent in themselves, but with their effect greatly lessened by the unhappy condition of the pupil, his failure emphasized before all the class until her well-meant efforts to help him over his difficulties are largely a failure.

The essence of the Batavia system is that personal aid is given under the most favorable conditions possible. No pupil who had failed

to recite satisfactorily would there be required to stand in his place in a crowded room, while from a distance his teacher explained, questioned or criticised in tones that none could fail to hear. Instead, she would wait until the period for individual instruction, when, having provided work for the class—study or written work—she would quietly call the pupil to her, and, speaking in gentle undertones, help him with his difficulty. She would do this in the best way, telling little, but leading the pupil to see for himself. The character of the aid given is a matter of confidence between the pupil and the teacher. The others have their work, and even if they listened, they would be able to hear little of what was said. Thus, while the pupil reveals his difficulty to his teacher, his weakness is not exposed to the possible ridicule of his fellow pupils. His teacher gets at the trouble which he would, perhaps, hesitate to confess in the hearing of his class; for some children will even declare that they understand rather than admit that they

fail to comprehend that which seems to present no difficulties to others of their class. It is not children alone who dislike to admit to a multitude the failure to see the point, while glad to be set right privately by a friend.

This, then, is one point essential to the success of the system under consideration; there must be a large degree of privacy. The teacher helps the pupil without scorching him with public criticism, open or implied, thus making him the possible butt of his fellows. Another thing and very important—she has not only realized the value of a gentle voice, that most “excellent thing in woman”—she has kept in mind that physically the pupil must be comfortable and at ease if he is to do his best, and so a table has been provided and a chair. There is room for the awkward boy to bestow his long legs, and the table is broad enough to permit him to get his arms comfortable upon it, if there is work to be done with pencil and paper. These are not trivial matters, unworthy of consideration.

Every teacher has seen pupils who suffered torture through consciousness of their awkward bodies, and it is folly to expect that under such conditions they will do their best thinking.

By means of this plan of conducting school work, it is very evident that much more cordial relations are likely to exist between pupil and teacher. We get nearer to a person by conversing with him than by hearing him lecture. The children are helped over the hard places and, understanding their work, enjoy it. With children, as with grown people, the thing that is understood is liked. No one goes far in anything that he does not enjoy doing. It is easier to depress and disgust human nature than to inspire it. We want the rewards of self-respect, the sense of victory achieved, the feeling of getting ahead. The teacher who gives individual instruction in the best way makes these things possible.

I do not claim that this method lightens the teacher's labors. It makes them more effective,

and thus removes the most discouraging thing that any teacher has to contend with—the feeling that she is not accomplishing what she knows she ought.

I ought not to close without mentioning what after all is the most attractive, and, I believe, most important result of the method, though not the one usually made most prominent by those who advocate it. This is its moral effect, its value in character shaping. If it had no other value its use would be justified by this alone.

Chapter XXVIII

*As seen in Canada**

My attention was first drawn to the schools of Batavia, New York, some ten or twelve years ago, when two pupils from that city presented themselves for enrolment in my school. I soon discovered in them a power for work and an independence of thought that was somewhat unusual. On making inquiries I learned something of what is known as the Batavian System, and ever since that time I have had a desire to investigate the system, and see it in actual operation.

An opportunity to gratify this desire was afforded me in October, 1912. I received a very cordial welcome from the City Superintendent, Mr. John Kennedy, and the Principal of the High School, Mr. E. A. Ladd, and his

*Report of Dr. J. A. Houston, Inspector of high schools Province of Ontario to the Minister of Education.

staff of teachers, and was given every opportunity of seeing how their work was carried on. I visited the primary classes in the elementary schools, the higher classes in the grammar grade (corresponding to our junior and senior fourth), and the classes in the High School, observed the work of the teachers both with the class and with the individual pupil, examined the records of the pupils, and questioned many of the teachers as to their methods of dealing with the difficulties which must necessarily present themselves in a High School of over four hundred pupils. I wish to place on record here my appreciation of the many courtesies received from the Superintendent, teachers, and pupils during my investigation.

The plan now adopted in the schools of Batavia had its genesis in an overcrowded room of some sixty pupils, for whom there was no room elsewhere. To relieve the congestion, a somewhat novel scheme was proposed, namely, to put in the room another teacher whose time

should be given to those pupils who were found to be lagging behind their fellows. Her especial duty was to deal with the backward pupil, and give him an opportunity to make something of himself. The teacher selected to carry out this experiment was one gifted with a rare personality and superior teaching power, and to say that the experiment proved a success would be to put it very mildly. The dull pupil disappeared; the atmosphere of the room changed; the spirit of work prevailed; there were no longer bright pupils with nothing to do and slow pupils who could do nothing. The plan was extended to other overcrowded rooms with equal success.

Then came the question, was this change for the better to be attributed to the presence of two teachers in a room, or to the combination of individual and class instruction? A further experiment was tried in one-teacher rooms, with normal sized classes. This was to devote to class instruction one half the time apportioned to any subject, and give the other half

to individual work with pupils who required it. This experiment proved such a decided success that the plan has been carried on for some twelve years or more, and no teacher in Batavia today would desire for one moment to revert to the old order of things.

I can best give the fundamental idea underlying the Batavia plan by quoting from a report made by Superintendent Kennedy. He says: "All normal children are susceptible of education if they are dealt with in accordance with their natures. Our plan of supplementary individual teaching enables us to reach the individual needs of children, and to put them in the way of maintaining themselves in a graded system. The graded system is, in my opinion, a powerful, even a necessary instrumentality in the education of the vast majority of children. It is the visible ladder by which the children climb to success. The motives of children must be immediate and concrete, and when this concrete progress is inspired by interest and the

sense of achievement, success is assured. It is because children are neither alike nor equal that they have to be attended to individually. Their individuality is their most precious possession, and that individuality, individual attention tends to conserve. It is not their inferiority but their individuality which makes them nonresponsive and obstructive."

The scheme of class-individual instruction in Batavia is carried out in two different ways.

(1) In certain overcrowded rooms two teachers are employed, one in class instruction, the other in individual work. This method is used in only a few of the lower grades of the elementary schools. I saw this plan in operation, and there was not the slightest sign of confusion. Every one seemed happy and contented, and I was assured by the teachers that the progress of the pupils was all that could be desired.

(2) In all the classes of the elementary schools, which are not overcrowded, and in all the classes of the High School, the teacher devotes to class

work one half the time assigned to any subject, and the other half to individual work. As Superintendent Kennedy points out: "This phase of the plan permits its extension and use under all conditions. It has furnished the solution for the problem of individualizing the High School."

In addition to this plan of dividing the class time, the courses of study and the time-table, in the High School, are so arranged that every pupil has about one third of his time in school to devote to quiet study and work by himself, either in the general study room, or in the classroom where individual work is going on.

The three elements which go to make up the Batavia plan then are:

- (1) Class instruction in the lesson as a whole, combined with the recitation and tests necessary to ascertain whether the pupil is doing his work, is gaining the desired knowledge, and is mastering the subjects assigned for study.

- (2) Individual attention, given when requir-

ed, to gain the confidence and learn the disposition of the pupil; to discover his difficulties; to give him judicious help by encouragement, questions, or suggestions; to put him in the way of helping himself.

(3) Regular periods for study, to give the pupil a chance to find himself, to gain self-reliance, independence, self-initiative, and to experience the joy of achievement.

Any plan or system of education may be judged in two ways: (1) by considering its theoretic merits and its inherent excellencies as tested by its agreement with correct pedagogic principles, and (2) by ascertaining the results which have followed its use for a reasonable length of time amongst those for whom it was intended.

Examined from the first of these view-points, the Batavia plan will stand the test.

(1) It combines the advantages of the graded or organized school, with those of the unorganized school of former days.

(2) It provides for the class instruction which is necessary to economize time and conserve the energy of the teacher in presenting his subject.

(3) It offers the stimulus and emulation of numbers working together for a common purpose, than which there is no more powerful influence in an average class.

(4) It recognizes the fact that there is no uniformity in the nature of children, and that individual needs can be satisfied only by individual attention.

(5) It enables the teacher to study the personality of each pupil and to accomodate his instruction to each one's peculiar requirements.

When considered from the second of the viewpoints already mentioned, the results shown in the Batavia schools, where the system has been in force for some twelve or fourteen years, are most satisfactory.

(1) It has the effect of retaining the pupils in the schools. Out of a total school attendance of 1,800, I found over 400 in the High School,

boys and girls being about equal in numbers. In the graduating class of June, 1911, there were 19 boys out of a total 32.

(2) It has practically eliminated failures in examinations. I examined the official reports from the Board of Regents at Albany on the results of their examinations in the Batavia High School, and found that the failures were less than one per cent.

(3) It has done away with the question of discipline, by removing the usual cause of the restlessness of a large proportion of the class, who are frequently left unoccupied, while the teacher explains to a few, perhaps to one pupil, a matter already thoroughly understood by the others.

(4) It has introduced a spirit of earnestness and interest which was manifest in every form in the school; every one seemed to feel that his ultimate success was a reasonable certainty.

(5) It has produced a class of independent and self-reliant pupils who appear to have

confidence in themselves and their powers, who have the spirit of work and the power to work.

(6) It has done away with the slow, unresponsive pupil who keeps the class back, by giving the assistance necessary to enable him to solve the personal equations whose unknowns were his latent energy and his confidence in himself.

In my report to the Minister on the condition of the High Schools under my supervision, I referred briefly to the wisdom of introducing into our system of teaching more study periods for the pupil and more attention to his individual needs. The adoption of some scheme along the line indicated in the preceding pages, with such modifications as would make it suit the different conditions in our schools, would, I am convinced, be of very great advantage. The serious defect of our present system is its want of elasticity; it is too machine-like in its operation; it makes provision for the classes, it fails to make provision, except incidentally,

for individual needs. The remedy appears to be what the Batavia plan provides, "organized individual instruction as the supplement and corrective of class instruction."

Chapter XXIX

*What to do with the Laggard**

What to do with the laggard in schools is a question pressing for an answer throughout the civilized world. Compulsory attendance and the exceedingly close organization of schools have made the laggard problem decidedly acute.

When attendance was voluntary and when schools were loose aggregations instead of organizations, the laggard could be ignored. If he sagged, he did not drag anybody else down. He just sagged down alone. When the school became insufferably tedious to him he just eliminated himself, and found congenial employment in the busy world, where his teeming energy and luminous intelligence found "ample room and verge enough." He went forth to be a great provider, a model husband, and father,

*From an address to the New York State Holiday Conference of High School Principals.

a sterling citizen and a pillar of the state according to his lights. The only drawback in his case was that his light was not sufficient to enable him to see all the dangers of the state. He was exposed to be the dupe of those who were only too willing to do his seeing for him.

The laggard cannot eliminate himself now. If he tries to do so he encounters a truant officer who runs him back in again. The laggard now encounters not only the tediousness of the school, but also its pinch. And a lad that has been pinched in school is not an assured triumph in civil life. We read in Scripture of a person whose last stage was worse than his first.

I have some tributes to pay to non-organization. It started many a great man on the way to fame and fortune. It opened an unobstructed course to those rare ones who could run alone, and who could maintain themselves without resting brakes, while ascending the hill of knowledge. The unorganized school never made any business for the doctor, nor for the undertaker, nor for the constable.

On the other hand the unorganized school let its laggards escape; and it discouraged all the rest of the children by giving them the task of Sisyphus; rolling the same old stone up the same old hill and ever finding it at the bottom again. The unorganized school was weighed in the balance and was found wanting. It has been retired. I am glad to say that it has passed. It has been passing into history, not without many claims to respect. But it will never return. It should never return.

I have hinted that organization has dire possibilities; and I am not through with them yet; there is still to be considered the tragedy of retardation. But the prevention of these evils does not lie, in my opinion, in putting the clock of time back fifty years. The great nineteenth century recognized the evils of non-organization; it grappled boldly with chaos; and it has left us a marvelous monument of itself in a most magnificently organized school system. It is for the twentieth century to

conserve and preserve that school system; to rectify and perfect it; to take every pinch out of it; to make everybody safe, happy, and successful who has anything to do with it.

Under the new order the laggard is decidedly in evidence. And he is most painfully aware of it. If he sags all the rest of the pupils are retarded; and they become great sufferers,—educationally, intellectually, morally, and even physically. The protests against retardation are loud; and justly so. The devices for the relief of retardation are at least interesting, even if they are not always wise, just, and sound. Some are saying that a crowd is preposterous, and that the quick individual needs to be disengaged. If he needs to be disengaged the slow individual needs it more imperatively; and therefore organization is a failure; we have simply snared our children. This is indeed plausible; for we have snared many children. But I hope to show that we have no right and no occasion to make a snare of organization.

But let us keep to the laggard awhile. When the laggard sags now, he does not sag away from the teacher; he sags right onto her. He gets on to her nerve. He breaks down her geniality; he breaks down her composure; he breaks down her teaching.

There can be tragedy in schools if organization is not controlled to beneficent ends. Then why take the chances on organization? Because without organization education is spiritless and unproductive. Organization is Samson in the full growth of his locks. Organization is the Archimedean lever that can uplift the world.

No, we will not go back. The pathway of education is now surveyed and staked off. Every child can see the stakes leading to a definite goal. He fights for his stake before he fights for the ideal. And the stakes make the ideal attainable. The primary child sees the stakes extending into and through the university.

The teacher now has a definite and sharply

defined task, instead of a vague one. The principle of the division of labor has been made the key to an aggregate momentum. Waste has been reduced to a minimum, if it has not been entirely eliminated. All the conditions of success have been contrived; and success is the mandate placed upon the management in charge.

But here comes in the laggard. Organization may propose; but the laggard disposes. The laggard commands the situation. Till he budes nothing can budge. The machine is clogged. The sickle, to change the figure, will not work; the reaper kills its horses in merely mutilating and ruining every spear of grain that it reaches.

The immediate cause is the laggard; he is the clog. If the laggard blocks the game, then why not get rid of the laggard? I think I see several potent reasons why not. One very important reason is that it can't be done.

You cannot put the laggard out of school;

for the law will not let you do so. And here I bow to the wisdom of the law, as well as to its majesty. Nor can you always kill the laggard; we have all seen laggards who have become persecution proof.

Then why not demote him? For two good reasons: First, he will sag the lower class, besides disgusting them with his huge presence; and in the second place, you will find new laggards doing his work in the grade from which he has been removed. It is a case of cutting off the head of the hydra only to breed two. The same would be true if you relegated him to a dunce class or "ran him in" with incorrigibles for merely being unfortunate. If you can bring yourself to do that thing, and if he and his parents would submit to it, you only provide for his successor.

I have never known a child who did not find his highest happiness in conquering a difficulty. And I have never known a child who has conquered a difficulty who did not want other

difficulties to conquer. They are all Alexanders; the taste of conquest inspires in them the lust of conquest. Education is a state of mind and character; the child is educated who has learned to do creditable things, and who is on the alert for creditable things to do.

"A still strong man in a blatant land," he "stands four-square to every wind that blows." The world needs such men, and the school that gives such men is one of the greatest blessings in the world. The good teacher will invite his pupils forth to manly exercises that lead to noble manhood. It is not in the halls of legislation that we must fight the grafter and the corruptionist. It is in the school room that the rights, the liberties, the dignity of men are to be conserved. "Let me write the songs of the people I care not who makes their laws." Let me write noble sentiments on the heart of an unspoiled child and in time he will route out every nest of thieves in the land. And in time he will disturb the nightly repose of the would-be Caesar.

I have said and perhaps I have shown, that you cannot eliminate the laggard; he is like the poor, he is always with you. You cannot eliminate the laggard if you would. I now assert that you should not eliminate him if you could. The laggard is a perpetual guarantee of strong teaching in the school. You cannot budge the laggard except by strong teaching. But strong teaching will do it; not by adapting the course of studies to his inertia: but by adapting the teaching to him. He must be reached individually. Wholesale processes have wrecked themselves on him in vain. Not that wholesale processes must be discontinued, for wholesale processes are the very life of schools. If the individual is safeguarded the general crowd becomes a powerful educational stimulus, the mighty uplift of education.

The laggard must be studied; and that is child-study of a most vital kind. His case must be diagnosed in order that it may be treated. His case is largely his own; and he cannot with

safety be bunched into a class. The laggard must be encouraged, not depressed; he must be trained to acquisition; he must be caused to find himself, to get acquainted with himself; he must be led to feel that his mission is not to throw up the sponge, but to challenge the whole crowd.

The laggard is a perpetual guarantee of great teaching in the schools; not merely because great teaching is needful to reach him, and through him to reach all; but because he can make the teaching great. The laggard is an educationist in the school, instructing and training the teachers. His lectures always ring true; they never fail to edify; and the teacher who has sat at his feet and been trained by him becomes a pedagogical giant.

And as the laggard is omnipresent he guards every point of our school system. Education may start off on excursions, in quest of primrose paths; but the laggard will continue to call back the Arnolds of Rugby, the Mark Hop-

kinses, the Martin B. Andersons, and the James McCoshes, to put ingenuous youth on their feet and point them to the utmost heights of attainment. And they are all ingenuous youth. Their blood is not only blue, but it is purple; they are not merely of the nobility; they are princelings of the imperial household. They are heirs to a sovereignty greater than that of the Romanoffs, greater than that of the Caesars.

The laggard in the organized school is a perpetual guarantee that the liberty and equality fought for by the demigods of Marathon and Bunker Hill, shall not pass from men; for when he goes to the front they all go there; and they all come into their own.

Much has been said about the levelling process; there never came a better process into this world, if the levelling is done in the right direction; if the levelling is upward.

But can this be done? It has been done for six hundred years in the schools that have given William of Wykeham and Arnold of Rugby

their fame. Where has there ever been a more closely organized school system? And where has there ever been a severer course of studies? Young lads demonstrating Euclid, construing Livy, and interpreting Aristotle almost before reaching their teens. And it has been a case of compulsory education; for, though it has not had the compulsion of law, it has had the compulsion of custom and parental authority. Who will say that those schools never encountered a laggard? Yet who can say that those schools ever had a left-over? The lad who enters Winchester, or Eton, or Westminster, or Rugby, or Harrow, might as well fail in battle as to fail to get into and through Oxford and Cambridge.

Those schools made the English democracy and the American democracy. That is not what they were started for; they did that incidentally, perhaps accidentally: the remarkable case of an aristocracy planting democracy in the world. It was in those schools that Eliot and Hampden

and Sydney dreamed their dreams of human rights. It was in those schools that the battles of Marston Moor and Naseby were won; it was in those schools that the British Empire was won. It was in schools descending from them and formed on their model that the American Republic was created, and its constitution written. It was those daughter schools that gave to history the names of Shiloh, Gettysburg, and Appomattox.

I do not find that those schools ever undertook to explain anything away. They just stripped to their work and won out by sheer good fighting.

And what a race of idealists they have given to the world. Honor and fame everything; dollars nothing. You must strive for Westminster Abbey. You must attain if possible that "grand old name of gentleman." And you must carry the rules of chivalry into modern conditions. A lie, a deception, a craven act, would turn your picture to the wall. Shield

the female and the helpless; punish him that molests you; but let your fight be ever fair; never use a ruffian's strategy nor touch a ruffian's weapon; never strike below the belt; and remember that when your man is down he is in a sanctuary as sacred as a Greek temple or a medieval cathedral.

Perhaps such ideals are obsolete. There are those however who would shudder to concede it. But you cannot sweep such ideals away as long as the world has laggards, and so long as the law treats the laggard as a "man and a brother," by running him into your schools. He is the leaven that will leaven the whole lump.

"The stone which the builders rejected has become the headstone of the corner." I believe in the laggard; and I like the teacher who believes in the laggard. I like the teacher who expects to get every one of her pupils through their grade. And if she expects to do so, she will do so, unless some unforeseen circumstance shall arise. I like to see a town building school

houses to accomodate its upper grades. I like to see a tidal wave of youth sweeping into the high schools and finding the traditional gulf nothing but an imaginary line. I like to see the laggard of the third grade carrying off the honors in algebra and Latin in the high school. I like to see him going to college and picking there the choicest cherry from the topmost twig.

But will not these apparent miracles kill the teacher? Did it kill Antaeus to touch his mother earth? The loveliness of character which the rescued laggard gives to his rescuer is equalled only by the physical vigor which her great service confers upon herself. I know nothing more sanitary than good teaching; nothing more conducive to longevity.

But how may the laggard be won? By just asking him a question that cannot be answered by yes or no; and by just keeping on asking questions till the 'giant arouses from his sleep and begins to shake his puissant locks;'—until his face begins to beam with intelligence;—

until his lip begins to curl with amused scorn at the mole hills that he had supposed were mountains.

E pluribus unum is the motto of our republic. *E pluribus unum* is the maxim of a good school: one mass *moving* with effective momentum because its several units are in superb condition.

I have treated the lagging as an involuntary thing, and therefore a misfortune. That is what it is almost exclusively in the grades. In the High School however, where boys become fellows, there is an occasional fellow who would like to stretch his legs, stick his hands into his pockets, patronize his teacher and all creation, and treat school work as a bore. It would be a great wrong to that fellow to treat him as a sufferer; it would be a great wrong to that fellow if he could not hear the sharp note of discipline. When the teacher speaks with deprecation the school is undone. I stand for no coddling; I stand for no indulgence. A man that can have no better high school than his

fellows choose to let him have, has mistaken his calling.

But how about the mental sag that comes from dropping into vice? Prevention is better than cure; busy children are vice proof; work is the disinfectant of the high school. Get work going; and it will soon be difficult to find a vicious character. Bring the laggard on. That is the solution of the whole matter. That ends the clogging.

Who can meet all these great responsibilities of the school? The strong teacher. And who can fill the schools with strong teachers? The laggard. Yes we need the laggard. He is the sheet anchor of our hopes.

Chapter XXX

*Class-Individual Instruction**

Class-individual instruction, better known as the Batavia System, had its origin in the town of Batavia, N. Y. The history of this origin is very interesting. There was an over-crowded room of some sixty pupils in one of the Batavia schools. By a fortunate suggestion on the part of Superintendent John Kennedy it was decided to relieve the congestion by putting an additional teacher into the room instead of taking a class out. This teacher was Miss Lucie Hamilton and to her rare personality and superior teaching power is due largely the initial success of class-individual instruction.

Miss Hamilton was not an assistant to the room teacher. Her rank was coördinate but her work was entirely different. It was to be

*From Classification in the Public Schools by W. H. Holmes.

wholly with those pupils who for one reason or another were behind their class. She was to work with these pupils individually until they were able to work with the other members of the class. She was to work with the laggards until they were able to work with the leaders. From this individual teacher, class-individual instruction took its rise. For the first time in the history of education a teacher had been assigned to deal with backward pupils in a humane way. Up to this time they had been neglected or else classed by themselves in rooms for backward pupils and with the spur that comes from an aggregation of dullness they were supposed to succeed. Now they were to be kept with their fellows and given the opportunity to succeed. And they did succeed. After a few months of class-individual instruction, it was evident that a marked change had taken place in the first of two-teacher rooms. Pupils who had been considered very dull began to improve, and some of them were soon up among the leaders.

There was only one way to explain the really marvelous change. The reason lay in the work of the teacher, who hour after hour, and day after day, had called the retarded and backward pupils to her side to find the difficulties, and to encourage them to overcome these difficulties.

There was not only a change in the working ability of the pupils, there was a change in their attitude as well. The whole atmosphere of the room was changed. All were happily at work. There were no bright pupils with nothing to do, and no dull pupils who could do nothing. The standard of work was gauged by what the ablest pupil could do, and all the pupils were soon well up to the standard.

So the good work went on in that room, and then the test came. Would the plan get similar results in other over-crowded rooms? Additional teachers were placed in other overcrowded rooms, and the results were as good as those of the original two-teacher room. It was thus shown that the success of the plan was not due

to the personality or ability of a specially gifted teacher.

The success of the plan was so great that the superintendent and school officials began to think that the two-teacher room, with the combination of class and individual instruction, was the only solution of the problem of the dull and backward child. But after the two-teacher plan had been in successful operation for a year, it dawned upon Superintendent Kennedy that success was due not to the two teachers but to the two kinds of teaching. It was the happy blending of individual with class instruction that was obtaining the results. So after thinking the matter out very carefully, he announced to the teachers of the regular grade rooms that they also were to give individual instruction. He tells us that they looked astonished and asked how it was to be done. His answer was that half the school time was to be taken for individual instruction and half for class instruction. Some of the teachers doubted; some

protested, saying they could only get the pupils along by giving all the time to class work and to expect the work to be done by devoting one-half the time to the dullards was simply preposterous.

"Well," said the superintendent, "the only way to tell is to try it. We have the old school plant intact. We have torn nothing down; and if the new plan proves a failure it will be an easy matter to go back to the old way. All I ask is that you give the new plan a thorough trial."

And they did—and no teacher went back to the old plan, and no teacher has ever wanted to go back. In this way the Batavian System had its birth. Its success in the single-teacher rooms was as marked as that in the two-teacher rooms. It met with like success in the rooms where one teacher taught two grades, and it has met with success in schools where the teacher has many grades.

Briefly, then, class-individual instruction is a systematic plan for helping slow and backward

pupils to help themselves. We know that it has wonderful power to open the minds and hearts of children, both large and small, and cause them to unfold and grow. Col. Parker has said that the best result of the Quincy idea was a more humane treatment of little children. The best result of class-instruction is a more humane treatment of all children, large as well as small. We have been sacrificing millions of our children to the machinery of the graded school system. We have been trying to mechanize education. Class-instruction seeks to humanize this mechanism. It is only sympathy and common sense combined. For years we have been writing and talking about the individual child but we have been doing very little for him. Class-individual instruction does something for the individual child.

The idea of the system is really very beautiful. Here is an intelligent, sympathetic teacher, studying her flock to find the needy ones. She calls these needy ones to her side, one after

another, and talks with them, and encourages them, points out their difficulties, and leads them to master these difficulties. She points the way,—she leads, they work and gain the power. The thing most needed in our schools is systematic, sympathetic individual help as an aid to class instruction. The plan we are considering gives this systematic, sympathetic, individual help.

What has the plan done for the children of Batavia?

It has given them the spirit of work and the power to work. The spirit of work is everywhere in all rooms. The pupils, all of them, attack difficulties with confidence and self-reliance.

You know there is a saying that "he who can is king." The children of Batavia *can*, they have power; they can do things; they are kings of their work. They attack difficulties without shrinking or cringing; and they master things usually. In the case they are not able to master a difficulty, there is someone ready to point

the way to mastery. The individual teacher is a leader rather than a helper. She has travelled the road and knows the way. She says to the pupil, "This way, follow me." The pupil follows but does the climbing himself; there is no boosting by the teacher.

The person who thinks that individual instruction means doing the work for the pupil misses the point entirely. The teacher works with the pupil, not for him. She gives him sympathy in his difficulties, but she never becomes so sentimental as to do his work for him. She encourages him by telling him that the difficulties he is meeting are such as all who have travelled the road of knowledge have met and mastered and they are such as he may master if he will put forth the effort. The successful teacher under the class-individual instruction plan is a sympathetic, patient, courageous leader and as such she develops sympathy, patience and courage in her pupils.

The late Professor Hinsdale, in his excellent

book, "The Art of Study," tells us that nowhere in this country is the art of study adequately taught. He then tells us that children must learn to study by studying under intelligent direction. The intelligent direction is the teacher's work. It means directing in the right way, time, and place. Teaching is causing the pupils to learn through intelligent direction. The pupil must do the work, do the studying himself. The pupils at Batavia know how to study and they study. They work and are happy. They have time for study and they use that for study. The great cry all along the line is, that children do not know how to study. How can they know if we do not give them the opportunity to learn? Direct them intelligently, give them something definite to study, and then hold them responsible for the work assigned and you will find the children will develop the power to study.

The fault with most teachers is that they help either too little or too much. In one case

the result is discouragement; in the other it is loss of power. To let a pupil wrestle with difficulties that he cannot master, is bad; to help him over difficulties that he can master with proper direction, is perhaps worse. Individual instruction aims to teach the pupil how to study by giving him something definite to study, with proper direction in case of need.

The children at Batavia have the power of independent work. There was no deception on the part of the pupil, no trying to tell something that the pupil did not know was right, in the hope that it might happen to be right. This habit of bluffing is perhaps the worst trait possessed by school children to-day. It is the attempt to get credit for something that is not the pupil's own possession. It is the direct result of the present system of class teaching, when the teacher is a tester and not a true teacher; where it is a disgrace to confess ignorance and to say, "I don't know." If a pupil in Batavia does not know a thing, he says so

frankly, and is either told to look it up, or at the next individual period he is taught what he did not know. There is no premium placed on superficial word repetition. There is no attempt to deceive the teacher; such an attempt would fail because the teacher knows her pupil. Her work is teaching not testing. She tests, of course; but she tests that she may teach; she does not teach that she may test. There is a great difference between the two kinds of work. The pupils are working for knowledge and power, not for a high per cent. of report cards. If the plan did nothing more than eliminate deception from class recitation it would be a great blessing.

Some of the chief merits of class-individual instruction are its provision daily for a definite amount of individual instruction and its insistence that this time be given to those pupils who are most in need.

It also lays stress on the fact that instruction is to be given at the point of greatest need rather

than of the daily lesson. This is one of the main principles of efficient individual teaching, yet it is one that it is hardest to get teachers to apply. Real individual teaching goes back, back until it reaches solid ground and there it begins to build.

The plan also provides the supervised study-period. The plan has been criticised because it devotes too much time to the backward pupils. It does devote a large share of the time to the backward pupils because they are the most needy but in case the bright pupil shows that he needs individual instruction he receives his share.

Chapter XXXI

Opinions of Teachers

It is interesting to read what teachers who have used individual instruction systematically in the school room for a period of several years say as to the relation between pupil and teacher brought about by its use. Here are some bits of testimony from teachers of Westerly, R. I., where individual instruction is a regular part of the daily work. A department teacher of the seventh and eighth grade writes:

"The strongest argument that I know of in favor of individual work is the opportunity it gives the teacher to win the confidence and understand the personality of the pupil. Especially is this true in departmental work, where, as in my case, there are upwards of one hundred thirty dispositions with which to deal."

Another seventh-grade teacher writes:

"There is closer sympathy between teacher

and pupils. The pupil is reached in a way that no other method reaches him."

A fifth-grade teacher:

"The teacher and pupil understand each other better, are drawn closer by questioning, and oftentimes a study once looked upon as a bug-bear becomes one of pleasure and much profit."

A departmental teacher in geography and science:

"I have observed a much more perfect understanding of pupil by teacher and vice-versa. Many cases of discipline have been most pleasantly adjusted through the use of this period. Many unpleasant happenings have been avoided by a timely talk, a suggestion given, or the case at hand clearly put before the pupil. When the way is clearly pointed out many follow carefully. In the case of new pupils, I have reached many through individual periods, have had them interested and reciting well in a short time, whereas I would not have established an acquaintance so soon had it not been for the

individual periods. This is especially noticeable in the case of children who are timed, who come from other schools, or from environments quite different from that of an average pupil."

A fourth-grade teacher:

"There is no doubt about individual instruction bringing pupil and teacher into closer relations. It broadens the sympathies of the teacher for the pupil. By it, the real difficulties and problems of the child are discovered. I have found children failing from poor sight or hearing, some whose minds were distracted from their work by regularly frequenting the 'cheap show,' and some who were purely lazy and needed to feel the pressure of compulsory work. I do feel that the opportunity that individual instruction gives me to know my children is very valuable. The personal contact with the teacher should and does mean much to the pupil."

Third and fourth grade:

"As a result of this work there is a pleasant

atmosphere in the room. Pupils do not become discouraged. They know they will be cheerfully helped. The teacher is able to know the pupils better, and pointing out his weak points to him while he is near her at the desk is more graciously received than if done in the presence of the whole class. I have never had a pupil who did not accept the individual help in the right spirit."

Mixed room:

"I think as a result of the individual system, the teacher and pupils become better acquainted with each other. There is a closer sympathy and a better understanding. The teacher sees more clearly the obstacles the child has to encounter, and the child learns to think of his teacher as a friend who will help him."

First grade:

"I think that the pupil and teacher are brought more closely in touch with each other by this system than by any other. I would

not have missed the close relationship for a great deal."

These bits of testimony are chosen at random from a considerable number. They represent fairly well the testimony of almost all the teachers who have used individual instruction for any length of time.

Leigh Mitchell Hedges quoted in the *Philadelphia North American*, from Prof. F. V. O'Shea of the University of Wisconsin.

"After visiting the Batavia schools I am persuaded that a work is going on there that will go into history as an educational renaissance, and that will equal the great renaissance of Italy in its importance to the human race. A system of teaching is growing up there that is destined to bless the world,"

Chapter XXXII

*A Minnesota View**

It was my privilege to visit the Batavia schools last October. I can truthfully say that the claims for this plan are well grounded. I visited every grade from the beginners through the high school. In every room of more than fifty pupils there was an individual teacher at her table in a convenient part of the room, busy at work.

In the lower grades, and even in the high school, pupils were told by sign or word to go to the individual teacher at once. I asked the privilege of listening to the work done by these teachers. It was found that ability to develop power to do, rather than to get answers was the

*From *School Education*. By the Associate Editor.

(The reader is referred to an editorial headed "Fourteen Years After," in our September issue for a summary of what has been accomplished by the Batavia System in the city where it was born, fourteen years ago.—EDITOR.)

aim. The pupils did not feel that it was a punishment but a favor conferred upon them to go to the individual teacher.

It was a pleasure to go from room to room and see the bright, happy faces intent on the work in hand, ready and anxious to do their best, not for show, but because the heart was full of joy and gladness.

If anyone failed he was directed to the individual teacher and the work of the class continued as if there had been no interruption. No time was spent in the class to note errors, reasons why, nor to see to it that the pupil understood wherein he failed. The individual teacher attended to that; the work of the recitation—the test and drill of the matter prepared by the pupils was first, last, and all the time. When a new topic was to be taken up sufficient time was given in the class to prepare for the study of the lesson by the class teacher. I was impressed with this fact throughout the school: that the recitation was the pupils and they were

kept busy and active all the time. Principles first, then application and drill. I did not wonder at the ability and skill of the army of children in the Batavia schools. Their ability to see, know, and appreciate showed itself in scholarship as well as in appearance and bearing.

One felt that character was being formed that would develop into true manhood and womanhood, making worthy American citizens.

I attended a part of the opening exercises of the high school. All were singing as we entered. To see 400 fine boys and girls standing proud and erect in their young manhood and womanhood, and to feel that the soul went out in the glad strains which echoed through the spacious auditorium was enough to inspire the coldest, unappreciative heart. As our eyes looked out over this beautiful scene and noted the large proportion of boys—nearly half—we felt like exclaiming aloud in congratulations over the fine showing. We enjoyed the choruses of this band—four hundred strong—but the climax

came when they sang their High School Song. They sang it with a spirit that thrilled us and filled our hearts with admiration. At the close of this song all stood and sang two stanzas of The Star Spangled Banner, then saluted Old Glory,—a large silk flag draped across the wall in front. Tears filled our eyes at this touching scene and we felt sure that our country would be safe in hands trained to such loyal deeds.

It is to be hoped that more schools will adopt the Batavia system and that more high schools will be filled with boys and girls who have turned their faces toward the goal that makes for character and citizenship.

Below is the Batavia High School Song:

The Blue and the White

Written by W. L. Coryell

(Tune: "The Orange and Black")

Our school has always favored
That rich and glossy blue,
Which, with white in combination,
Is beautiful and true.
They are always floating gayly
And never out of sight,
While in unison we're singing—
Long live the Blue and White.

We will ever praise our High School,
Which in Batavia stands;
"Individual Instruction,"
Known now throughout all lands;
And its faithful corps of teachers
Their duty never slight,
For they know that they are working
For the Blue and the White.

We recall athletic victories
On many a day before;
How we captured prize and trophy,
And still we wish for more.
But we're sure that we'll not falter
As we renew the fight,
Just because we're marching onward
'Neath the Blue and the White.

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